

STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAM REVIEW

SELF STUDY

G R O S S M O N T
C O L L E G E



Financial Aid

Revised: April 2018 (written by Michael Copenhaver, Director, Financial Aid & Scholarships)

SECTION 1 – MISSION

Name of Program:	FINANCIAL AID
-------------------------	---------------

PURPOSE OF SECTION 1.1 & 1.2: To help the committee understand how the department/program supports the mission of GC.

College Mission: *“Grossmont College is committed to providing an exceptional learning environment that enables diverse individuals to pursue their hopes, dreams, and full potential, and to developing enlightened leaders and thoughtful citizens for local and global communities.”*

1.1 Program Mission: What is your program’s mission statement? Please explain how the program’s mission relates to the mission of GC.

Program mission:	The Financial Aid Office will effectively administer financial aid programs and provide student centered support services that will promote student access, success and equal educational opportunities to enable students to fully develop their individual potential.
Mission’s relationship to College mission:	Both mission statements have a focus on the educational potential of students. Enabling students with access to educational opportunities to ensure their growth as individuals is at the core of each mission statement. Without Financial Aid programs and services, about 50% of our current Grossmont College student body might not have the financial assistance they need to pay for education related expenses. Many of these students would either struggle more than they already do to pay for their education or they would not be able to attend college at all and their hopes and dreams of a higher education would likely not be realized.

1.2 Mission statement improvement plan: Identify any plans your department/program has to change or revise its mission (when applicable).

Plan:	The Financial Aid mission statement was reviewed and updated in 2014 as a result of one of our 2011-12 program review recommendations. Additionally, it is annually reviewed (along with all items contained within our Financial Aid Policy and Procedure Manual – see Appendix F) with our colleagues from the Cuyamaca College Financial Aid & Scholarships department. This annual spring review ensures current competencies and efficiencies and allows both departments to effectively implement any necessary changes and enhancements.
--------------	--

SECTION 2 – DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW & PREVIOUS PROGRAM REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS.

PURPOSE OF SECTION 2.1: To help the committee understand the history of the department/program, what your department/program does and your overall place in the college.

- 2.1 Introduce the self-study with a brief department history (limit to 1 page). Include changes in staffing, curriculum, facilities, etc. (You may wish to cut/paste your previous department history and edit).

History:	<p>The Financial Aid program has been an integral part of Grossmont College since its inception in the early 1960's. The primary purpose of the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office is to provide financial assistance to eligible students who can benefit from further education, but may otherwise be unable to do so without such assistance. The Financial Aid program is governed by the laws and regulations under Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act (HEA), the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR's), California Education Code and by Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Generally, the sources of financial assistance are comprised of grants, fee waivers, work-study programs, loans and scholarships. The specific Grossmont College Financial Aid award programs are outlined in the Definition of Terms section in Appendix A of this document under the FINANCIAL AID entry and also in Appendix C.</p> <p>The operating budget for the Financial Aid program in 1995-1996 was approximately \$760,000; the operating budget in 2002-2003 was approximately \$1.1 million and the operating budget in 2016-2017 was approximately \$1.7 million. This constitutes a 123% increase over the twenty year period.</p> <p>Conversely, the total number of students awarded financial aid in 1995-1996 was 5,396; the total number of students awarded financial aid in 2002-2003 was 7,220 and the total number of students awarded financial aid in 2016-2017 was 14,990. This constitutes a 177% increase over the twenty year period. Furthermore, the contract staffing level in 1995-1996 was at 12; in 2002-2003 the staffing level was 14; the contract staffing level in 2016-2017 was 17. This constitutes a 41% increase over the twenty year period.</p> <p>One pivotal change to our department was the remodel of Building 10 back in 2011. As a result, the department went from approximately 800 square feet to roughly 1,300 square feet. This had a tremendous impact on staff morale and also allowed us to grow in areas we never thought possible. For example, the department has been able to moderately grow in staff size since the remodel while also being able to comfortably accommodate the housing of the Dream Center within our department, which was created in 2015.</p>
-----------------	--

PURPOSE OF SECTION 2.2 & 2.3: To help the committee understand your department/program and key services provided through your program and the population it serves.

- 2.2 What population does your department or program serve and what are their needs? (Use bulleted list and limit to ½ page.)

Population Information:	<p>The overall composition and diversity of Grossmont College financial aid students is multi-faceted. The data breakdown and demographic comparisons are available in Appendix D and are similar to the overall student population for the College.</p> <p>In addition, there is an overarching characteristic with regard to financial aid students; financial need. There are ranges of financial aid students extending from poverty level to low income to middle class. Personal finances and need are highly sensitive for many of us, especially our financial aid students. We consistently see trends in increased anxiety amongst our students,</p>
--------------------------------	--

	depending upon the time of year and the current condition of the state and national economy. How we address these needs can vary as broadly as our student populations. The department staff is sensitive to these issues and provides appropriate customer service to ensure confidentiality when delivering services to our financial aid students.
Needs:	Additional staff to serve the special needs of these populations (2 new FTE contract staff should be sufficient – see Section 8.3 & 8.7 for more details) and further professional development and training opportunities in the following key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Competency • Emotional Intelligence

2.3 Please list and describe the key services provided through your program.

Service:	Description:
Financial Aid Outreach/Inreach	<p>Application workshops, Financial Aid awareness workshops (for students, parents, high school counselors and college & community departments), Financial Literacy workshops (<i>coming soon</i>).</p> <p>A specific form of inreach that we do is to contact financial aid applicants' mid-year who are enrolled, are Pell eligible and their application file is still incomplete. We reach out to them and see what additional assistance we can provide to them to ensure their financial aid application can be completed and any financial assistance they may be eligible for can be disbursed. The number of these students often runs as high as 1,000.</p>
Application Assistance and Support	Includes, but is not limited to, one-on-one assistance with submissions or corrections to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), California Dream Act (CADA) application, Scholarship applications, Dreamkeepers on-line application, and the California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the BOG Fee Waiver) on-line application. This can also involve coordination with state and federal agencies such as the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) and the federal Central Processing System (CPS).
Financial Aid Advising & Process Navigation	<p>Assisting students with the following documentation submission and review processes (this is not an exhaustive list but includes some common and more complex items):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification, which can include intricate federal income tax form review and this can be for federal financial aid or for the California College Promise Grant certification • High School Graduation Status certification (for federal or Cal Grant processes) • Data Base Match Hold resolution which includes Selective Service registration, Citizenship status confirmation, Social Security Administration confirmation, National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) confirmation for Defaulted loan or grant Repayment resolution • Financial Aid petitions and appeals, which includes review of student academic history and pathway to goal/degree completion • Loan applications and Master Promissory Note (MPN) certifications • Potential Fraud alert and Identity Theft resolutions • Unusual Enrollment History appeals • Professional Judgement decisions such as Dependency Overrides (which may include sensitive issues of neglect, abandonment or abuse) and Special Circumstances income adjustments (which may deal with loss of employment and loss of housing) • Homeless assessments • Orphan, Ward of Court or Guardianship determinations • Scholarship application and essay review • Consortium Agreement review

<p>Financial Aid Awards & Disbursements to Students</p>	<p>After financial aid applications are reviewed for eligibility, students are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis (with a few exceptions – see the Student Equity & Special Populations Program Support section of this table three rows below). The different types of aid awards that may be disbursed to students are included in Appendix A under the FINANCIAL AID definition. For additional detailed financial aid award data, see Appendix C.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, Grossmont College awarded \$35.9 million in federal, state and institutional financial aid to approximately 58% of our students. Roughly \$34 million (or 95%) of the funds awarded was in the form of grants or scholarships; funds that do not have to be paid back. The average amount of financial aid awarded per student was \$3,039.</p>
<p>Work-study Coordination and Placements</p>	<p>After a student is awarded federal College Work-study, they are instructed to attend an orientation (if they are new CWS recipients) to go over certain hiring and work-study procedures. They are also given the opportunity to review all the departmental requests for CWS students, which include job types and definitions, duties and responsibilities, hours needed and pay rates. If a student was a CWS recipient in the prior award year, they only need to make an appointment with our CWS coordinator to go over the available job positions.</p> <p>After a selection is made by the student, they are referred to the faculty or staff supervisor for the posted job for an interview. If the student is selected for the position, our CWS coordinator assists the student in the completion of the hiring packet for submission to HR. The CWS coordinator also works with all the supervisors to ensure they understand the CWS contract that they have signed, which includes the students total CWS award, the average number of hours they can work and how to track the CWS hours for the student so they don't work more than their award. If the student is not selected for the position, we will conduct another two referrals for the student in an attempt to place them in a CWS position. After the third attempt, the student is informed that their CWS award will be cancelled.</p> <p>Additional information on the CWS program is in Appendix F in our Financial Aid Policy and Procedure manual.</p>
<p>Satisfactory Academic Progress Operational & Educational Support</p>	<p>For students who do not make SAP (see definition in Appendix A), they are required to attend either a COUN 095 course or attend a Financial Aid Advising workshop.</p> <p>The purpose of the COUN 095 class is to educate financial aid students, who have been placed on Financial Aid Disqualification status, about SAP requirements and financial aid appeal procedures. Students attending the class will learn about support services available that will help them succeed and they will learn about planning resources that will assist them in developing a two semester educational plan for Grossmont College. Additional success topics include note-taking, time-management, study skills and stress management. These courses are taught in conjunction with the Counseling department.</p> <p>Financial Aid Advising workshops are designed for students who are new Financial Aid applicants, but their GPA or overall units attempted are beyond the threshold, and they are given this intervention to enable them to navigate the Financial Aid appeals process.</p>
<p>Student Equity & Special Populations Program Support</p>	<p>We have Financial Aid program Liaisons for Umoja, Puente, the Dream Center, Veterans and also for Homeless students.</p> <p>For our Guardian Scholars program (which serves our former foster youth students), we co-coordinate that program with CAFYES.</p> <p>For all populations of students that had disproportionate impacts in the areas of access, student success and completion (according to our Student Equity Data), we have priority financial aid processing. Financial Aid eligibility is typically reviewed and then awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. However, since many of these populations were identified as having disproportionate impacts in access and student success measures, we decided to collaborate</p>

	<p>with special program on campus and prioritize the eligibility review for these populations (as identified and served by the programs mention above, with exception of Veterans as they were not identified as disproportionately impacted in our Student Equity Data). This means that for students identified as Umoja, Puente, Dream Center or Guardian Scholars, we will process them with all other students in the current deadline que, regardless of when their file completion date was.</p> <p>In January 2017, the College formed the Basic Needs Task Force and we designated Homeless Liaisons in Financial Aid.</p> <p>Financial Aid also designates Liaisons for the EOPS Summer Institute (SIP) program every year to better serve these students.</p>
Priority Registration Operational Support	<p>Since Financial Aid is the central office that identifies (through our application and verification processes) former Foster Youth and Homeless students, we send updated files every term for priority registration so A&R can code these students in Colleague.</p>
Dream Center Operational Support	<p>The Financial Aid department houses the Dream Center and supports its activities in multiple ways. We assist their students with the California Dream Act Application, the verification process for Cal Grants and we also coordinate other financial aid support services through our Dream Center Liaison (i.e. financial aid presentations at Dream Center orientations and events, actively participating in the Undocumented Students Taskforce, etc.).</p>

PURPOSE OF SECTION 2.4 & 2.5: To help the committee understand what the last program review recommendations were, and how your department addressed and implemented them.

2.4 Your last program review contains the most recent SSPR Program Review Committee recommendations for the program. Describe changes that have been made in the program in response to recommendations from the last review. (Be sure to use the committee recommendations and not your own). Include the recommendations from the last program review in this section.

SSPR Recommendations:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would like further clarification regarding the types of workshops given (in reach and outreach) and the outcomes of the workshops. 2. Recommend the facilitation of more financial aid outreach to the campus community (students, faculty and staff). Work more closely with the outreach program to reach out to high schools. 3. There was a feeling from the committee that the Financial Aid website was challenging to navigate and some areas need updating. The following links do not work: download forms, online Financial Aid/Counseling Workshop, and ask an advisor. 4. Good job in developing and completing an SLO cycle. However, I would recommend that Financial Aid revisit their SLO's to make sure they all address "learning". 5. Wondering why Cuyamaca is an HSI based on Financial Aid applications, and we are not, even though we have a larger Hispanic population. Should we be doing more outreach to the Spanish speaking community? 6. Would like to see outcome data for students who receive the Dreamkeepers scholarship. 7. Is there any data that shows the number of scholarship applicants to ensure qualified and competitive pools? Request clarification regarding outreach efforts to inform students about the numerous scholarships. 8. Revamp Mission Statement.

Department/Program Response to Recommendations:

1. Clarification and more detail on the types of outreach and inreach (see Section 2.3 above) has been provided. Outcomes on particular workshops have not been obtained as this is extremely labor intensive and we have not had the resources (human or technical) to develop a sustainable process for this evaluation. However, the fact that our student financial aid recipient numbers continue to increase (see Section 2.1 above and Appendix C) enable us to deduce that our outreach and inreach efforts are effective.
2. Since the official formation of a college wide Outreach department in 2016, our outreach coordinator has worked diligently to partner with them. We have also strengthened the relationships with the local high schools by conducting increased FAFSA and Parent Night workshops since the change in the FAFSA application period from January 1st of every year to October 1st of every year (this occurred in October 2016 for the 2017-2018 award year). An important note here is that financial aid outreach has always been conducted with no official designee; meaning it has always been coordinated by someone on a volunteer basis to ensure these commitments are met by the department. As a result, we do not have collected data on this. However, we will begin to compile this data for 2018-2019 and forward since we have a contract staff member who will coordinate our financial aid outreach efforts as part of their regular duties.
3. The webpages have been updated and we are not aware of any additional broken links. As to the difficulty in navigating our webpages, we are somewhat constrained by Cascade and the format they have been constructed in by the vendor. However, we have worked to improve the layout of the information on our webpages and have also included FATV videos in many parts of the website. This service was launched in Fall 2016 and there are over 100 videos in four different categories that provide a great deal of information to students.
4. Financial Aid, along with the rest of Student Services, is in the process of identifying a new division wide SSO that will more accurately measure what we do as a department, in terms of serving students.
5. Grossmont has since become an HSI serving institution and received a Title V grant to build infrastructure and services (including outreach) to better serve our Hispanic students.
6. I have requested 2016-2017 student outcome data that is also disaggregated by certain programs designed to engage and retain students (i.e. Dreamkeepers, CWS and the Full-time Student Success grant). Although I made this request in September 2017, I have not yet received it.
7. We have not been able to address this recommendation. First, we have had the implementation of several initiatives that have arisen (i.e. Student Equity, the California Dream Act and the creation of the Dream Center, Basic Needs Taskforce, etc.) since the last review recommendations back in 2012 that have taken priority over this. Second, we had multiple transitions in our Scholarship Specialist position in 2015 and we were just able to fill it with a permanent replacement in February 2018. Now that we have a permanent replacement for our Scholarship Specialist, we will work on this recommendation for 2018-2019.
8. This was completed back in 2014.

2.5 If relevant, please provide a brief summary of any audit or compliance review conducted by your department/program or an outside agency. This may include an audit of state and federal mandates related to department/program funding sources. If the audit/review is conducted by an outside agency, please include that information.

Comments:	As described in Section 2.1, there are a multitude of federal and state regulations that impact the Financial Aid program every year. Although every year provides its own unique challenges, we have maintained operational compliance with federal and state regulations, as evidenced by the annual District audits we are required to go through and the unqualified findings from the auditors. In addition, the Financial Aid program went through a California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) audit in Spring 2010 and the auditor found that the Grossmont College Financial Aid program had administered the Commission's programs in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, contracts and institutional agreements.
------------------	--

SECTION 3 – DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM GOALS & IMPROVEMENT

PURPOSE OF SECTION 3.1 – 3.4: To describe the main goals and objectives for the program (goals might include objectives for a specific or focused area of student support, a combination of support elements for a specific target population, state or federally mandated activities or other activities directed at providing support to students).

3.1 What were your goals in the last program review cycle, and did the program achieve those goals?

Comments:	<p>The Financial Aid & Scholarship department has ongoing standardized goals that it continually reviews and endeavors to improve upon and they are included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure compliance with College and District policies and procedures and federal and state regulations.• Focus on continued improvement of customer service.• Regularly re-evaluate and streamline the financial aid application process for easier access and delivery of services to students.• Provide educational outreach to current and prospective students, families, staff, faculty and local community regarding financial aid information (i.e. Academic Planning and Financial Aid course, Parent/Student College Night, Financial Aid & Scholarship application workshops, etc.).• Coordinate with other departments within Grossmont College, Cuyamaca College, and the District as well as other higher educational institutions, and federal and state agencies.• Implement the latest technological advances, as mandated by federal and state agencies.• Increase the number of applicants for scholarships and the number of scholarships available. <p>The Financial Aid department also has Six-year Unit Plan goals (which generally correlate to the above) and they are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Further refine and expand our financial aid outreach activities, which includes increased inreach to the general population as well as targeted outreach to current and former foster youth.2. Increase the retention and satisfactory academic progress rates of current and former foster youth.3. Increase department staffing to enhance the quality of financial aid services and the timely delivery of financial aid for all eligible applicants.4. Keep computer systems up-to-date according to U.S. Department of Education standards.5. Upgrade Financial Aid systems to ProSAM for enhanced and automated processing of aid applications.6. Provide opportunities for state and federal training to be conducted for staff.7. Improve Financial Aid staff morale. <p>We have made progress on goals 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 above. As mentioned earlier, we have recently hired a new FA Programs Specialist. One of their duties is to coordinate FA Outreach and, while this has been on-going and effective, we hope to further codify and improve this service. We have also added one additional position since our last program review (a FA Technician) and we are currently working on hiring another permanent FA Assistant. Furthermore, we upgraded all staff and workstation computers about three years ago and we will likely upgrade again this year or next. We have also been diligently sending staff to conferences and trainings and are also working with the College</p>
------------------	---

Professional Development office to schedule cultural competency training for our staff. Lastly, we have conducted annual staff retreats since our last program review (with the exception of 2017). We have not been able to achieve goal 2 and 5 for multiple reasons. Goal 5 was due to too many other initiatives that took priority and additional priorities in Information Systems. The reasons for not achieving Goal 2 will be discussed in Section 3.5 below.

3.2 Make a rank ordered list of priority goals and objectives for your department/program for the next three year cycle. (When developed be sure to keep in mind “SMART” Goal standards, and Grossmont’s Achieve the Dream strategic plan).

Goal:	Description:	Action Plan:
1.	Increase student access and success rates for former foster youth.	A new position has been hired and working with this population will be a primary focus (in fact, other than interacting with students generally with regard to outreach, former foster youth are the only student caseload this position has). In addition, this position will coordinate with CAFYES and other counselors to ensure they have sufficient academic planning and support.
2.	Maintain and upgrade our financial aid database processing systems to effectively and efficiently administer aid to students.	More Information Systems support is needed in this area as our main programmer is close to retirement and there is no other programmer in IS that has this type of expertise or skillset.
3.	Increase contract staffing to a level commensurate with the needs of financial aid students and to ensure optimal compliance with federal and state regulations.	Assuming we are able to hire our latest position (FA Assistant) and maintain our current level of contract staffing, Financial Aid can maintain compliance with federal and state regulations. However, this a minimum level of service to meet program integrity requirements. Given how important financial aid is to student access and success (as demonstrated by our numbers in Appendix D), it is crucial to add two additional contract staff over the next three years. One will be a Scholarship Assistant to allow the expansion and improvement of the campus scholarship program. Second, we will need to hire another position to better support our Student Equity and Success efforts. When one also considers projected changes in our system’s funding model, we will need to work diligently to increase our completion rates. Additionally, I think we need to seriously examine the level of contract staffing support and capacity in District Accounting. I strongly believe that they need more staff to better support compliance with federal cash management regulations.

3.3 Please reflect on the “Institutional Capacity” (IC) of your goals. (IC = use of Information Technology & Institutional Research; Process for identifying achievement gaps; Process for formulating and evaluating solutions; Commitment to and capacity for data-informed decision making).

Comments:	Moving forward, we may need more assistance from Research (college or district) with respect to Goal #1 in Section 3.2 above for more current Student Success and Equity data, since the most current data is from 2015. As stated in Goal #2 in Section 3.2 above, we do need to work on increasing our IS support for maintaining and improving our Financial Aid systems.
------------------	--

3.4 Identify your most successful goal. Describe how this goal was a success (including activities, supporting data).

Comments:	The most successful goal since the last Program Review was number 3 as stated above in Section 3.1. These additional hires have provided the necessary support to ensure financial aid program integrity and enable the department to function effectively.
------------------	---

3.5 Identify your least successful goal. Describe how this goal was unsuccessful (include challenges or obstacles encountered and any changes to this goal and why).

Comments:
<p>The biggest goal we still need to make headway on is number 2. The general financial aid population makes Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at a rate of about 65% (this means that approximately 35% of financial aid students don't make SAP in any given term). Note: while this 35% number may seem high, it is actually very good as many of our community college colleagues throughout the state have financial aid satisfactory progress numbers that are only around 50% for their general population.</p> <p>While the SAP rates for the general population are around 65% here at Grossmont, former foster youth only make progress at a rate of about 40%. This is one of the primary reasons we have hired our new FA Programs Specialist. In addition to coordinating Outreach and Financial Literacy, they will co-coordinate our Guardian Scholars program and they will work directly with this population.</p> <p>The challenges former foster youth face can be numerous and daunting (i.e. abandonment, neglect or abuse, aging out of a foster care system without proper guidance and support to effectively transition to independent living, etc.). Additionally, while some states are better than others at providing social support and care for foster youth, there are still shortcomings in a system that is supposed to provide for the education and healthy development of youth. We are struggling to help former foster youth students overcome these deficiencies so that they may become more success in college. This is the entire reason behind the creation of the CAFYES program and also why it is being expanded to another 10 community college districts in the coming year.</p>

PURPOSE OF SECTION 3.6 – 3.11: The committee wants to gauge department/program efforts as they relate to quality, vitality, and responsiveness to student needs. Similarly, to review how these efforts inform department improvement and refinement.

3.6 Please describe any programmatic changes to services in your department/program (i.e. accomplishments, changes in service, etc.) during the last 3 years.

Service:	Process(es) used to support change(s):
Student Equity & Special Populations Program Support	As described above in Section 2.3.
Dream Center Operational Support	As described above in Section 2.3.

3.7 How does the population you serve assess the department/program?

Comments:

The division used to do Student Services wide student surveys (for some reason the College or the District stopped doing this) so the primary feedback we receive from students is through sporadic comments/observations. However, in Fall 2017, student focus groups were conducted by an independent third party and the results of that data are in Appendix E (I have highlighted the pertinent information that deals with financial aid in yellow).

As a result of this feedback, we are working with the College Professional Development office to plan and conduct a series of trainings and workshops for our front line staff to provide cultural competency information and skills building. It is our hope that, if successful, it will then be expanded out to the rest of the department and other Student Services programs if they are interested.

3.8 Explain how external factors (e.g. state budget, local economy, local job market, changes in technology, similar program or service at neighboring institutions) influence your department/program, and describe any measures that have been taken to respond to these factors.

Comments:

The most obvious and direct external factor for financial aid is the federal or state government. Whenever new financial aid legislation is passed, our program has to respond (often very rapidly). As a result, we work very closely with our sister college financial aid office to pull expertise and resources. Furthermore, Region X Financial Aid is very strong in terms of our relationships and collegial interactions. We meet regularly (about 7 times a year) and often simply call one another to bounce ideas off of our colleagues regarding particular financial aid or student related issues we may be facing. In fact, our final meeting of each year (which is usually in October or November) is conducted jointly with our neighbors to the north, Region IX, which includes Irvine and San Bernardino. We also work very closely with the state Chancellor's System Office as they are great at providing support for our programs.

Another external factor is the condition of the current economy (national or state). A good or moderate economic period can result in lower demand for financial aid. Conversely, bad economic periods typically result in sharp increases in demand for financial aid (this was evident during the last recession and discussed at length in our 2012 Program Review as economic recovery was just beginning). Additionally, although many categorical programs had their operating budgets cut, Financial Aid programs across the entire state were able to demonstrate high demand for financial aid and the need for many unemployed students to come back and be retrained. Thus, Financial Aid department categorical funding was never cut during this last recession.

Technologically, Financial Aid is usually at the forefront of automation and innovation. We were the second department on campus (after A&R) to fully implement document imaging and we are constantly evaluating our services to more efficiently serve our students. This is why IS support is so crucial to our programs. When you have about 30 million dollars running through a single department every year, you have to be innovative. Financial Aid students have access to all their financial aid information via a secured web portal (through WebAdvisor) and everything that they need (i.e. forms, file status updates, processing and program information, award and disbursement details, etc.) can be accessed via the web. One technical enhancement that is still pending (due to lack of resources, both fiscal and human) is to give students the ability to electronically submit their required forms and financial aid information via a secured submission process. Finally, Financial Aid (at both campuses) is the primary driving force behind

updating and improving our District Information and Security plan and implementing strategies to prevent data breaches.

3.9 Describe how your program coordinates with other programs on campus and how improved coordination could enhance institutional effectiveness.

Comments:

The Financial Aid program is a crucial component of student success (a measurement of institutional effectiveness) here at Grossmont College. As such, there is a great deal of interaction and coordination with other departments on campus.

For our Guardian Scholars program, the continual development of internal relationships with Admissions & Records, CAFYES, the Foundation and various other departments are crucial. With the passing of AB12, the relationship we have with our A&R department in the identification of our former foster youth students, to ensure they have priority registration, is pivotal. Furthermore, in collaborating with Brian Woolsey (our CAFYES Coordinator) Sam Rigby (CAFYES Program Specialist) and other staff in the CAFYES and EOPS departments, our foster youth students are able to develop the necessary educational plans and receive the necessary academic support. The Foundation helps us manage our Foster Youth Emergency Fund to assist students with emergency needs.

The Scholarship program collaborates with many departments across the campus in coordinating student scholarship application evaluations. This activity involves individual members of the Grossmont College Scholarship Advisory Committee (which consists of faculty and staff from outside Financial Aid) and also involves specific program departments like DSPS and Theater Arts, just to name a few, who have their own departmental scholarships that are awarded through the Financial Aid department. The Scholarship Specialist also interacts with the District Auxiliary and the Cashier's office when coordinating Dreamkeepers fund disbursements to students.

The federal Work-study program has constant interaction with a majority of the departments on campus. Every year, our CWS coordinator (Financial Aid Assistant, Sr.) manages all the campus wide work-study position requests and position placements for the upcoming year. During the year, the Financial Aid department maintains frequent communication with Work-study Supervisors/Chairs/Coordinators to inform them of any changes that may occur on the student's work-study award and to assist them in any way we can.

There are a few crucial collaborations with some key departments that need to be mentioned. Without these interactions and the support they provide, we would not be able to function as a Financial Aid department and students would not have access to the financial support we provide.

Our Financial Aid Appeals Committee includes Pearl Lopez (EOPS counselor and department Chair), Gary Johnson (Counselor and General Counseling Financial Aid Liaison) and Beverly White (Admissions & Records Evaluations Advisor). Their combined expertise is invaluable when determining whether or not the committee should make case-by-case exceptions on student appeals for additional aid due to lack of progress or for exceeding our institutional unit maximums.

Financial Aid and Counseling continue to collaborate on the COUN 095 course, which is described in more detail in Section 2.3 above. Beginning Fall 2017, as a result of our successes, the Cuyamaca College Counseling and Financial Aid departments partnered to begin offering their own COUN 095 courses for the first time.

We also coordinate very closely with College Outreach and will also begin partnering with Via Rapida on their First Year Experience program in the coming year. This collaboration is important so we can maximize our resources in these vital activities.

The Financial Aid office also coordinates closely with the Instructional Operations department for required updates to our federal Program Participation Agreement (PPA). Marsha Raybourn, the Instructional Operations Supervisor, is essential to the successful re-certification process for the College. Her expertise in the area of academic programs, especially newly approved degree programs and certificates, is a great asset to the Financial Aid department.

Last, but not least, the collaboration and support we have received on the Basic Needs Taskforce has been immeasurable. A national study published in 2017 and conducted by the Hope Lab out of Wisconsin (sponsored by the Association of Community College Trustees) found that two in three community college students face food insecurity. This means approximately 67% of our students have faced, or will face, food insecurity. This was also shared by some of our students in our Fall 2017 Focus Group data (see Appendix E).

3.10 If there are any other measures or considerations you would like to include regarding your program's vitality, please explain.

Comments:	The Financial Aid program staff is highly skilled and requires constant training to remain current in their field of expertise. Ever changing federal and state regulations require consistent training and professional development be provided. Specific conferences and trainings include the annual CCCSFAAA, CASFAA, NASFAA or FSA conferences. Only a fully trained and competent staff can maintain the program integrity needed for complex Financial Aid programs.
------------------	---

3.11 If applicable, briefly explain your department/program plans for improvement and refinement.

Identify any plans your department/program has to:		Details:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change or improve services.	Given the feedback from some students in the Student Focus Groups conducted in Fall 2017 (see Appendix E), we need to refocus some additional training and professional development on cultural sensitivity, cultural competency and overall customer service standards to ensure that students feel comfortable asking for help navigating through what is already a bureaucratic process. While our department is tasked with upholding federal and state regulations, we need to better balance this with the student expectation that we also be their advocates.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change or improve department/program assessment.	We are currently working on changing and reassessing our department SSO. We look forward to working with our campus SLO Coordinator and Research to improve in this area.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve involvement with the community.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Improve coordination with other programs on campus.	We need to improve our relationship and communication with the Foundation for the advancement of our Scholarship and Dreamkeepers programs. There has been a great deal of transition in both departments and we need to find a way to bring back our semester Scholarship Breakfast celebrations (or some version that works for both departments). My counterpart at Cuyamaca and I will begin scheduling meetings this spring with the Foundation/Auxiliary to begin this process.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	

SECTION 4 – INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES & CAMPUS STRATEGIC PLAN

PURPOSE OF SECTION 4.1: To describe how Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are supported by your department/program.

4.1 Check each ILO supported by your department/program and corresponding area of Integrative and Applied Learning.

ILO:		Integrative and Applied Learning:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World.	<input type="checkbox"/> Broad, Integrative Knowledge. <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized Knowledge.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intellectual and Practical Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication (written and oral) fluency <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use of information resources <input type="checkbox"/> Critical and Creative inquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork and problem solving
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Personal and Social Responsibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Productive citizenry (civic knowledge and engagement) <input type="checkbox"/> Intercultural knowledge and competence <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical reasoning for action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

PURPOSE OF SECTION 4.2 & 4.3: Please demonstrate how your department/program links into GC’s strategic plans of Outreach, Engagement, Retention and Institutional Capacity (IC). (IC = use of Information Technology & Institutional Research; Process for Identifying Achievement gaps; Process for formulating and evaluating solutions; Commitment to and capacity for data-informed decision making).

4.2 Summarize your program strengths in terms of (limit to ½ page):

Strategic Goal:	Strength(s):
Outreach	<p>Financial Aid Outreach (which also comprises inreach) is ongoing and will continue to be more robust. We have hired a new permanent position which will coordinate general Financial Aid Outreach (see bullets below) and will also coordinate a new Financial Literacy program for a tentative launch in 2018-2019 and will hopefully be expanded campus wide sometime in the 2019-2020 award year.</p> <p>Financial Aid Outreach includes all of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAFSA and CA Dream Act Application Workshops • Financial Aid High School outreach (application workshops, parent information nights and high school counselors) • Satisfactory Academic Progress workshops and COUN 095 • Financial Aid presentations to incoming freshman, new health science student cohorts, adult re-entry and new EOPS/CARE/CaWORKs/CAFYES program students • Coordination with College-wide Outreach events and campus tours • Financial Literacy workshops (<i>coming soon</i>)

Engagement	<p>One of our most effective student engagement programs is College Work-study (CWS). Students are directly engaged with the institution, and its inner workings, by being employed in our departments. It is also more convenient for many students as they do not need to commute off-campus for work. The impact of the CWS program with regard to student success and completion rates is evident in Appendix D.</p> <p>Additionally, our Program Liaisons engage our special populations in all program related activities (i.e. Umoja term kick-offs, Puente & Dream Center orientations, etc.).</p>
Retention	<p>Financial aid keeps students in the classroom and brings them back the next term (see data sample in Appendix D). As demonstrated in this sample, Financial Aid student success numbers are higher than the overall student population. This has been true for decades and was also demonstrated in the data included for our 2012 Program Review.</p> <p>Furthermore, 2016-2017 was the first year we have asked for disaggregated data on three key Financial Aid programs (College Work-study, Dreamkeepers and the Full-time Student Success grant). All three are designed to increase student retention and persistence rates and this is evident in Appendix D.</p>
Institutional Capacity	<p>As mentioned in Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.8, Financial Aid has much of their services automated and we continue to work with IS on technological enhancements. Also evidenced by Appendices C, D and E, Financial Aid uses a tremendous amount of data resources to assess and improve our services to students and other departments.</p>

4.3 Summarize your program challenges in terms of (limit to ½ page):

Strategic Goal:	Challenge(s):
Outreach	<p>Since we have a contract position responsible for coordinating FA Outreach and Financial Literacy, we think we will be very effective moving forward in this area. Sometime in 2018-2019, we will re-assess any program efforts and data outcomes collection and will determine necessary improvements, if any, and will also examine any potential need for supplemental support (i.e. additional Financial Aid Ambassadors, materials or equipment).</p>
Engagement	<p>Now that we are going to partner with Via Rapida, I think there may be a need for more staff over the next year or two to increase our program Liaison support and expand and improve on our soft touch services to historically under-served populations.</p>
Retention	<p>We need the Foundation to actively fundraise and improve their efforts to acquire additional and sustained funding for the Dreamkeepers program.</p>
Institutional Capacity	<p>Increased IS support will be critical if we are to implement an on-line Financial Aid form completion and submission process that is completely secure and routinely tested. Security protocols, data encryption and on-going threat assessment, for electronic submissions of sensitive student information often contained in our Financial Aid forms is a hurdle that must be overcome.</p> <p>Lastly, our phone system is completely archaic and no longer serves the needs of our department. We receive regular complaints from students about being hung up on (dropped calls). I have made inter-departmental calls myself and either get disconnected or transferred to another department I did not dial an extension for. This is an intolerable situation and needs to be remedied as quickly as possible.</p>

SECTION 5 – STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES & STUDENT SERVICE OUTCOMES

PURPOSE OF SECTION 5.1: To access practices used to achieve Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Student Service Outcomes (SSOs). SLOs and SSOs allow faculty, staff, administrators and institutional researchers assess the impact of services and instruction.

5.1 How does your program support student learning?

Comments:	The Financial Aid department, as well as the rest of Student Services, is in the process of re-working our departmental SSO to conform to a division wide standard which each department will measure through an as yet to be determined qualitative assessment tool.
------------------	---

5.2 Please use the table to fill in the appropriate information regarding:

- SLOs/SSOs measured
- Assessment Tool - Briefly describe assessment tool.
- Assessment Analysis - Summarize the assessment results; discuss what student needs and issues were revealed
- Next Steps - How will you address the needs and issues revealed by the assessment?
- Timeline for Implementation - Make a timeline for how you will implement the next steps outlined above

SLO/SSO MEASURED:	
ASSESSMENT TOOL:	
ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS:	
NEXT STEPS:	
TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	

SLO/SSO MEASURED:	
ASSESSMENT TOOL:	
ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS:	
NEXT STEPS:	
TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:	

PURPOSE OF SECTION 5.3 – 5.6: To show how SLO/SSOs assessments were used to improve teaching strategies, develop curriculum, modify and/or update curriculum, and guide program planning. Applicable only to departments/programs that offer courses of instruction. Briefly answer the following questions.

5.3 How does your department manage and follow the 6 year SLO Assessment Plan?

Comments:

5.4 How does your department use SLO assessments to discuss teaching and learning in your courses?

Comments:

5.5 How is the information from those discussions communicated to the faculty in your department/program who teach?

Comments:

5.6 What assistance is needed from the College to remove barriers to SLOs being an effective and important component of your department planning (from writing SLOs to assessments to communicating action plans)?

Comments:

PURPOSE OF SECTION 5.7- 5.10: For departments that offer courses of Instruction. To describe how curriculum is maintained and/or developed.

5.7 Describe how your course offerings have changed since the last program review. Have you added or deleted courses? If so, why?

Comments:

PURPOSE OF SECTION 5.8: To understand your practice for reviewing outlines. For example: when you submit a new course, a course is modified, or a course update is submitted to the curriculum committee.

5.8 Describe your department's practice for determining that all course outlines reflect currency in the field, relevance to student needs, and current teaching practices.

Comments:

PURPOSE OF SECTION 5.9: To describe what the department does to maintain high academic standards amongst its faculty.

5.9 What orientation do you give to new faculty (both full- and part-time), and how do you maintain dialogue within your department? Consider department practices, academic standards, and curricular expectations (i.e. SLOs and teaching to course outlines)?

Comments:	
------------------	--

PURPOSE OF SECTION 5.10 – 5.11: To evaluate the department’s success with course delivery methods in online vs. hybrid vs. face-to-face platforms.

5.10 If applicable, provide a comparison of the retention and success rates of distance learning sections (including hybrid) and face-to-face sections. Is there anything in the data that would prompt your department to make changes? (Required data will be provided by the Program Review Data Liaison – insert here).

5.11 Briefly explain your department/program plans to improve and refine SLOs.

Identify any plans your department/program has to:		Details:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change or improve your SLOs/SSOs.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change or improve how the department/program assesses SLOs/SSOs.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change or improve department/program services as a result of SLO/SSO findings.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	

SECTION 6 – STUDENT SUCCESS & EQUITY

PURPOSE OF SECTION 6.1:

- To have department/programs examine the effectiveness of the program.
- To have departments/programs explain what they have done to improve student success.

6.1 How does your department/program contribute to student success outcomes (promote transfer, completion of educational goal, retention, and/or future success)? As compared to previous years?

Comments:	As mentioned above in Sections 2.3, 3.2, 3.9 and 4.2, Financial Aid does a great deal to support student retention, persistence and overall course success. This is evidenced by the Student Success data in Appendix D and is historically consistent with data collected and reported in prior Financial Aid Program Reviews.
------------------	---

PURPOSE OF SECTION 6.2: To have departments/programs explain what they have done to improve student equity and support to special populations.

6.2 Please answer the following questions:

Access: How do the services you provide to students facilitate access and equity to special populations?

Support: How do the services you provide to students support special populations? How do the services support students while attending the college?

Access:	As discussed in Sections 2.3, 2.4, 3.2 and 4.2, the Financial Aid department has increased our efforts to provide FA Outreach, which in turn provides crucial information and assistance so students can afford to pay for college. This directly correlates to access for our special population students as many of them couldn't attend college if they did not have assistance in paying for their educational expenses.
Support:	As discussed in Sections 2.3, 2.4, 3.2 and 4.2, Financial Aid has worked diligently to increase our support for special populations, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of program Liaisons and improving on the on-going relationships to better collaborate and support our mutual efforts in serving these students. • The creation and expansion of priority financial aid processing for special populations shown to have disproportionate impacts in access and student success. • Financial Aid makes college more affordable for low-income students and supports their continued attendance at Grossmont.

SECTION 7 – STUDENT DATA

PURPOSE OF SECTION 7.1: To use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to demonstrate the department/program: scale of operation, efficiency, and effectiveness. Using SARS, MIS, or department/program collected data, analyze quantity of service provided to the GC student population. If departments/programs are supplied with specific area data from the Data Liaison, use 7.2.

7.1 If applicable, report program/area data showing the quantity of services provided the past 2 academic years (i.e. number of workshops or events offered, ed plans developed, students served, etc.)

KPI or Service:	Year 1 (2015) Quantity:	Year 2 (2016) Quantity:
% of student population receiving financial aid	51%	62%

PURPOSE OF 7.2: Summarize findings of additional data provided to your department/program by the Data Liaison.

Comments:	
------------------	--

PURPOSE OF SECTION 7.3: To have the department/program examine the trends represented in the data from 7.1 or 7.2.

7.3 What story does your data tell about efficiency, responsiveness, timeliness, number of requests, etc.? (Use bulleted list and limit to ½ page).

Comments:	The percentage of Grossmont College students receiving Financial Aid went up from the 2015 KPI report to the 2016 KPI report. I think this may have been an anomaly as we might be starting to level off in this category. For example, the 2017 KPI report will likely reflect that the percentage of total students receiving financial aid has gone down slightly (to around 58%). As a result, the Financial Aid department will need to look into increasing our applicant inreach efforts to assist students in completing their financial aid files to move forward with their eligibility determinations.
------------------	---

SECTION 8 – STAFFING, FACILITIES & RESOURCE NEEDS

PURPOSE OF SECTION 8.1 & 8.2: The committee is interested in knowing about the people in your department and what they do.

8.1 Briefly describe the duties of faculty, classified staff, and hourly workers who directly work with the program. (Use bulleted list.)

Position:	Responsibilities:
FA Supervisor	Coordinates the technical and professional day-to-day operations of the Financial Aid Department <i>back</i> office; assists with the planning, organization and direction of federal, state and local financial aid programs. Daniel Hernandez oversees the FA Programs Specialist, FA Advisors, Scholarship Specialist and the FA Technicians. He performs a form of quality control called Second Review and does periodic reviews of eligibility determinations made by the Programs Specialist and Advisors to ensure regulatory compliance. Daniel also Chairs the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.
FA Front Office Supervisor	Coordinates the technical and professional day-to-day operations of the Financial Aid Department <i>front</i> office; assists with the planning, organization and direction of federal, state and local financial aid programs as they relate to front line services. Luma Shamon oversees the FA Assistant, Sr., the FA Assistants and all hourly support staff serving our students at our front counter. She second reviews all Direct Loans prior to certification and submission to COD. Luma is also a member of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.
FA Programs Specialist	Coordinates Financial Aid Outreach and Financial Literacy (<i>coming soon</i>) services and co-coordinates the Guardian Scholars foster youth program along with our CAFYES Coordinator. Diana Barajas advises and supports former foster youth students and determines their financial need and program eligibility for all types of financial aid. She also follows-up with students who need assistance when submitting Chafee grant applications. Diana is also a member of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.
FA Advisor	Coordinate all Verification, SAP and Appeal reviews and all other financial aid eligibility determinations before students are packaged and awarded aid. Nadia Almaguer, Andre Bin-Walee, Iliana Garcia and Brenda Gates all advise students on any number of complex financial aid issues, are standing members of our Financial Aid Appeals Committee and conduct our FA Advising Workshops.
Scholarship Specialist	Coordinates and administers the college Scholarship and Dreamkeepers programs. Josceline Torres assists and supports students seeking scholarship and emergency aid and she coordinates all the activities under the charge and scope of the Scholarship Advisory Committee.
FA Technician	Coordinate specialized functions and technical assistance in support of financial aid programs and services. Monserat Arango coordinates our Cal Grant and Child Development Grant programs and Laura Sahagun coordinates the reconciliation of our Pell Grant program, which includes Return of Title IV Fund (R2T4) calculations and overpayment notifications to students. Both Monserat and Laura deal with program reconciliation.
FA Assistant, Sr.	Coordinates College Work-study assignments campus wide and provides technical assistance in support of front office operations. Kirstyn Wagner also assists with the Direct Loan program in its certification for students and in annual reconciliation for this and the CWS program. She also conducts loan counseling when needed.

FA Assistant	Assist students with all document intake and processing for all financial aid programs. Meron Cholagh, Jessica Lee and Fabronya Yaqo provide special technical support to the FA Advisors in the process of financial aid eligibility determination. They also provide mentorship and support to all front line hourly staff.
Student FA Ambassador	Support and assist the FA Outreach program and various Liaison programs for our Special Population students. They also help students one-on-one with FAFSA and CA Dream Act applications.
Student FA Assistant	Assist students at our front counter with all types of financial aid inquiries and document intake. They also answer phones and do a variety of clerical tasks to support Financial Aid office operations.

8.2 How do these positions contribute to basic department function and/or the success of students in the program?

Comments:	I believe the answer to contributing to basic department functions is included in the Responsibilities column of Section 8.1 above. As to contributing to the success of students in our program, I believe that has also been demonstrated throughout this entire document with regard to the descriptions above detailing the various support services we provide to students and to other departments. It is also evident from our Student Success data in Appendix D. In conclusion, I'll just add that all of the positions above (both contract and hourly) perform multiple functions in Financial Aid and on various taskforces (e.g. Undocumented Students Taskforce and Basic Needs Taskforce). Our Financial Aid staff are the most dedicated people I have ever had the privilege of working with.
------------------	--

8.3 Are the current levels of staffing adequate? Discuss part-time vs. full-time ratios and issues surrounding the availability of part-time faculty, classified staff, and student/classified hourly's. If available provide supporting documentation.

Comments:	No, we are currently at 17 contract FTE (includes all classified, supervisory and management contract staff). However, the NASFAA 2017 Staffing model shows that, for an institution of our size, we should be at about 20 contract FTE (see 2017 NASFAA Staffing Model Grossmont Results in Appendix G).
------------------	---

PURPOSE OF SECTION 8.4 – 8.6: To determine how departments utilize various campus facilities and the impact on student service delivery and access.

8.4 List the type of facility spaces your department/program utilizes for service delivery and/or instruction. This can include on-campus, off-campus, and virtual. (Use bulleted list.)

Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Aid Offices, Building 10, for day-to-day operations in the service of students • Computer labs as needed for application workshops • Classrooms as needed for financial aid information workshops and COUN 095 courses • Conference/Meeting rooms as needed
--------------------	--

8.5 Are the spaces listed in 8.4 adequate to meet the program’s educational objectives?

Yes No

- If you checked ‘yes’, please explain how your department/program utilizes facility space so your department can meet its educational objectives. Please provide an explanation of specific facility requirements of your program, and how those requirements are being met.
- If you checked ‘no’, please explain how your department/program is not meeting its facility space needs, in order to adequately meet its educational objectives. Please provide an explanation of specific facility requirements of your program, and how those requirements are not being met by.

Yes:	See Section 2.1 (Building 10 renovation) and Section 8.4 above.
No:	

8.6 What proactive steps have you taken with regards to facility and scheduling to improve the ability of your department to meet the educational objectives of your program?

Comments:	Very few since 2012 as our new offices currently meet our departmental facility needs.
------------------	--

PURPOSE OF SECTION 8.7: Please list significant resource needs that should be currently addressed or in near term. For each request, identify which goal guides this resource need (use identified goals from Section 3.1).

8.7 Fill in the table with your resource needs; indicate the guiding goal, type of request, and brief description.

Indicate which goal(s) guide this need:	*Type of Request, P, T, PH, PD, O :	Brief Description:
Goal 3	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship Assistant • Financial Aid Advisor or Financial Aid Technician
Goals 4 & 5	T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More IS programming support to maintain and enhance our financial aid database systems and implement secure on-line electronic form submissions • Upgrade Building 10 Lobby computers for students to complete Admissions and Financial Aid applications

*P = Personnel; List faculty and staff in order of priority.

T = Technology

PH = Physical; List facility resources needed for safer and appropriate delivery of services.

PD = Professional Development; List need for professional development resources in priority order.

O = Other; List any other needed resources in priority order.

PURPOSE OF 8.8: The committee is looking to recognize department/program efforts for outside funding.

8.8 If your program has received any financial support or subsidy outside of the college budget process (grants, awards, donations), explain where these funds are from, how they are used, and any other relevant information such as whether they are on-going or one-time.

Comments:	We receive intermittent one-time donor funding (from various individuals and organizations) for our Guardian Scholars program. On average, this amounts to approximately \$2,000-\$3,000 a year. We also receive one-time and on-going donations for our Scholarship programs. The amounts fluctuate, but I would estimate anywhere from \$10,000 to \$30,000 a year.
------------------	--

SECTION 9: COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

PURPOSE OF SECTION 9.1- 9.3: To evaluate the value of the program review process from a department/program perspective and suggestions for improvement.

9.1 Please rate the level of your agreement with the following statements regarding the program review process:

1. This year's program review was valuable in planning for the continued improvement of our department/program
2. Analysis of the program review data was useful in assessing department/program outcomes and current status in multiple areas

Question:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. SSPR Value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Useful for Analysis & Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9.2 How could SSPR be improved to assist your department/program in completing the self-study?

Comments:	More consistent data gathering processes that mirror our SSPR submission timelines. To accomplish this, I believe there should be more coordination and communication with data liaisons at both the campus and district research departments.
------------------	--

9.3 Describe any concerns or possible dangers to the integrity of the department/program that may be of impact before the next review cycle such as: retirements, decreases/increases in full or part time instructors, addition of new programs, funding issues, etc.

Comments:	<p>Our department is not currently expecting any retirements, but we do have at least 6 interim substitute assignments as other department staff have been either promoted or are being given other interim opportunities in other departments throughout the district.</p> <p>As noted in Section 3.2 above, we are concerned about the forthcoming retirement of our IS programmer. I realize this is not the purview of the College SSPR Committee but it would be most appreciated if a recommendation could be made all the same, so that it could be shared with District IS.</p> <p>Lastly, there is a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety across the entire state about proposed changes to our funding model and about the Block Grant proposal for integrating categorical program funding sources. As yet, I have not heard or read that Financial Aid categorical funding is specifically among them, but who knows what the ultimate results will be. Regardless of which departments are impacted, the College needs to be proactive in anticipating concerns and fears about this process (and I understand that this is problematic as no one is certain what it might look like). However, starting a dialogue so that takes these types of uncertainty into consideration needs to happen more often.</p>
------------------	---

APPENDICES

Please follow these instructions when gathering appendices information.

Please place tabs in front of each appendix with the appendix # and title. Please paginate the appendix as well, continuing the page count from the rest of the report.

- A. Definition of Terms
- B. Financial Aid SSO Data
- C. Financial Aid Award Data (2016-2017)
- D. Financial Aid Student Success Data (Retention, Persistence, Course Success & Completion)
- E. Student Focus Group Data (Fall 2017)
- F. 2016-2017 Financial Aid Policy & Procedure Manual
- G. 2017 NASFAA Staffing Model Grossmont Results

APPENDIX A – Definition of terms

AB540 – a 2001 law that authorizes any student, including undocumented students who meet specific criteria, to pay in-state tuition at California’s public colleges and universities (e.g. California Community College, California State University, and University of California). Any student, except a person in nonimmigrant status, who meets the requirements, shall be exempt from paying nonresident tuition at all public colleges and universities in California.

BFAP – the Board Financial Assistance Program is a state categorical budget classification. These operational funds are allocated by the CCCC Student Financial Assistance Program unit and are roughly based on the amount of CA College Promise Grants (formerly know as BOG Fee Waivers) the college awards to students in the prior award year. Of course, funding amounts also depend on state budget legislative authorization. The purpose is to assist in the operational costs incurred by financial aid programs in the processing and awarding of this unique program.

DFAFS – the Departmental Federal Assistance Financing System is a federal categorical budget classification. These operational funds are allocated by the U.S. Department of Education and are based on a legislated percentage of our annual Campus Based award allocations to enable the institutional financial aid program to claim an Administrative Allowance for operational costs. These categorical funds are also generated by additional legislative operating support of \$5 per Pell recipient in the prior award year. This funding source is also dependent upon federal appropriations and legislative authorization. The purpose is to assist in the operational costs incurred by financial aid programs in the processing and awarding of these unique programs.

CAFYES (Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support; also known as NextUp) – state program designed to assist former foster youth students who were in foster care between the ages of 16 and 18. This program is solely coordinated through the CAFYES program, but collaborates closely with our Guardian Scholars program (see definition further down in this Appendix) on financial aid related issues, foster youth verifications and interrelated program services issues.

CALIFORNIA DREAM ACT (CADA) – a 2011 initiative that resulted from AB130 (addressing institutional scholarships) and AB131 (addressing state financial aid) to allow any student who is eligible for an in-state tuition exemption under AB540 (see above reference) to be eligible to apply for state financial aid and be considered as potential recipients of these awards.

CASFAA – the California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. The statewide equivalent of NASFAA (see below), which also provides training and professional resources.

CCCCO – California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. The primary point of contact for institutional financial aid programs, and sometimes the U.S. Department of Education, is the Student Financial Assistance Program (SFAP) unit. The SFAP unit also coordinates with CCCSFAAA on state and federal financial aid issues.

CCCSFAAA – the California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators Association. The Community College equivalent CASFAA, which also provides training and professional resources. CCCSFAAA also coordinates with the CCCCCO’s SFAP unit on state and federal financial aid issues.

COD – federal Common Origination & Disbursement receives and processes all school initiated Pell Grant and Direct Loan award and disbursement records and then sends the processed records back out to the various colleges and universities with codes indicating acceptance or rejection of the award or disbursement record for individual students.

CPS – federal Central Processing System, which receives and processes all initial student FAFSA application submissions and then sends the processed FAFSA records out to the various colleges and universities.

DATABASE MATCH HOLD VERIFICATION – a process by which all FAFSA applications are run through federal database matches (e.g. Department of Homeland Security for Immigration and Naturalization Service confirmation, Social Security Administration for SSN/NAME/DOB verifications, Selective Service to verify males required to register for this program and potential NSLDS flags for loan defaults and overpayments).

DEPENDENCY STATUS – a term used to determine whether or not a student financial aid applicant is required to report their parent’s income and household information on their FAFSA or CA Dream Act application.

DREAMKEEPERS – the Dreamkeepers Emergency Financial Assistance program. Developed with support from the Lumina Foundation for Education and the Wal-Mart Foundation, the Dreamkeepers Emergency Financial Assistance program at Grossmont College, in partnership with Scholarship America, provides students with emergency funding to allow them to remain in school when faced with unexpected financial hardships.

FAFSA – the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the federal financial aid application that all students must complete and submit electronically to be considered for federal Title IV student aid programs, as well as the Cal Grant.

FINANCIAL AID – can be a generic term to describe the department or a series of operations governed by Title IV, but primarily refers to direct financial assistance awarded to a student or used to offset direct or indirect educational expenses incurred by a student. Financial Aid can be in the form of grants, waivers or vouchers, work-study programs, loans or scholarships and includes, but it not limited to, the following:

FEDERAL	STATE	OTHER
Pell grant	CAL grant	Scholarships, Institutional (i.e. Foundation Griffin Award of Excellence and various departmental scholarships)
Supplemental Educational Opportunity (SEOG) grant	Full-time Student Success grant	Dreamkeepers Emergency Financial Assistance Program
	California College Promise grant (formerly known as the Board of Governors, BOG, Fee waiver)	
Federal College Work-study (CWS)	EOPS, CARE, CalWORKS, CAFYES (also known as NextUp) grants or vouchers	
Direct Loans	Child Development grant	
	Chafee grant	
	Scholarships, State (i.e. Osher Scholarships)	

FSA – Federal Student Aid is an office of the United States Department of Education that is responsible for managing the student financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

FYSI – the Foster Youth Success Initiative. The Foster Youth Success Initiative was launched in 2007 in recognition of the significant deficit in success and completion outcomes regarding youth from foster care in higher education. Acknowledging this need, the CCCCO sponsored a concerted effort called FYSI to bring issues affecting these youth to the forefront and to improve their ability to access postsecondary education and benefit from the support services that are available.

GUARDIAN SCHOLARS (formerly known as EFFORT, the Eops Financial aid Foster youth Outreach Retention Team) – this program is co-coordinated by the Financial Aid department, in conjunction with CAFYES, and is designed to assist potential college students who were or are being emancipated out (also known as aged out) of the foster care system. This program was created in response to the statewide initiative known as the Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI). As a result of a change in 2017 in the state definition of a former foster youth (a student who was in foster care between the ages of **16** and 18) and the standard federal

definition on the FAFSA (a student who was in foster care between the ages of **13** and 18), the Guardian Scholars program is essentially our umbrella program serving all former foster youth. We closely coordinate with the CAFYES program (which follows the state definition) on both sub-populations of former foster youth on various services including, but not limited to:

- foster youth status verifications
- financial aid eligibility and basic needs support
- academic progress support
- priority registrations with A&R
- joint program engagement activities

IPEDS – the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, established as the core postsecondary education data collection program for the National Center for Education Statistics, is a system of surveys designed to collect data from all primary providers of postsecondary education.

MIS – the Management Information Systems Data Mart is coordinated by the CCCCCO and provides information about students, courses, student services, outcomes and faculty and staff. MIS reporting is required of all California Community Colleges, as this is how the majority of required federal IPEDS information is obtained by the U.S. Department of Education on our California Community Colleges.

NASFAA – the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. This national organization advocates for financial aid students and for college financial aid programs to the U.S. Department of Education and to the U.S. Congress. They also provide training and professional resources that are very beneficial to schools.

NSLDS – the National Student Loan Data System. This agency compiles enrollment and cumulative student loan debt for all students and institutions participating in Title IV programs. There are various reports that are available to schools from NSLDS, including the annual Cohort Default Rate (CDR) report.

PPA – the federal Program Participation Agreement is a formal agreement by the institution and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and is a prerequisite to Grossmont College's initial and continued participation in any Title IV, Higher Education Act Program. Every Title IV institution must re-certify every six years.

PERSISTENCE – the percent of students who attend one semester and then attend the next or subsequent semester, i.e. the percent of students who attend both the fall and spring semesters.

PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT – a process that allows a financial aid administrator, or their designee, to take extenuating circumstances that apply to individual students and their families into consideration in the determination of the student's eligibility for federal aid.

RETENTION – after first census, the percent of students earning any grade but a W in a course or series of courses.

SAM – Student Aid Management is the Financial Aid database system for Grossmont College, which is a product of SIGMA Systems, Inc.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) – guided by federal regulations, SAP standards are evaluated by measuring the maximum time frame and pace of progression a student takes to complete their degree objective (Quantitative Standard) and by measuring a student's GPA (Qualitative Standard). These standards are evaluated at the time of application for federal and state financial aid funds for new applicants and at the end of each enrollment period (Fall, Spring and/or Summer) for continuing applicants. Federal SAP standards apply to all students regardless of previous financial aid history (with the exception of CA College Promise Grant recipients). CA College Promise Grant (formerly known as the BOG Fee Waiver) academic and progress requirements mirror those outlined in Title 5 of California Education Code and any student subject to these provisions petition for consideration through the Admissions & Records Office Petitions Committee.

SCHOLARSHIP AMERICA – a national non-profit organization that supports student scholastic achievement and success. Scholarship America assists the Grossmont College Financial Aid Department in the coordination of the Dreamkeepers program.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS – from the federal definition, special populations are:

- individuals from economically disadvantaged families
- single parents
- displaced homemakers
- individuals preparing for nontraditional training and employment
- individuals with disabilities
- individuals with other barriers to educational achievement, including individuals with limited English proficiency

From the institutional perspective, special populations can also be defined, or specifically identified, as a result of being shown to have disproportionate impacts in their student access, success and completion data outcomes.

SUCCESS – the percent of students still enrolled after the first census who earned a grade of A, B, C, or Pass in a course or series of courses.

VERIFICATION – term used to refer to a process by which some students are selected by CPS to be verified by the Financial Aid office at the student's institution of attendance. After a student submits their FAFSA application, and if selected for Verification, the school must collect certain additional documents to verify certain data elements on the student's FAFSA. The most common data elements that must be verified are annual taxable and untaxable income (for student, spouse or parents) and household size. Approximately 1 out of every 3 students is selected for some form of verification under federal parameters. For the California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the BOG Fee Waiver), about 1 out of every 10 students is selected for verification.

APPENDIX B – Financial Aid SSO Data

Left Blank Intentionally

APPENDIX C – Financial Aid Award Data (2016-2017)

MIF20F
10/11/2017 4:27:45pm

Grossmont College

Page: 1

2017 MIS Final FA
Summary

Financial Aid Type	Headcount	Amount	Total w/cents
BOGW - Part A-1 TANF	454	305,141	305,141.00
BOGW - Part A-2 SSI	152	83,996	83,996.00
BOGW - Part A-3 General Assistance	2	460	460
BOGW - Part A-4 Veteran/National Guard			
BOGW - Part A Unknown Basis			
BOGW - Part B Income Standard	9820	6,672,530	6,672,530.00
BOGW - Part C Financial Need	4063	2,758,436	2,758,436.00
Fee Waiver - Dependent of Deceased			
Fee Waiver - Dependent National Guard			
Fee Waiver - Dependent Veteran	482	393,438	393,438.00
Fee Waiver - Medal of Honor			
Fee Waiver - Dependent of 9/11			
Total Amount		10,214,001	10,214,001.00

MIF20F
10/11/2017 4:27:45pm

Grossmont College

Page: 2

2017 MIS Final FA
Summary

Financial Aid Type	Headcount	Amount	Total w/cents
Academic Competitiveness Grant			

Cal Grant B	1426	1,864,390	1,864,390.00
Cal Grant C	43	17,684	17,684.00
Full Time Student Grant	921	462,650	462,650.00
EOPS Grant	800	391,910	391,910.00
CARE Grant	37	17,175	17,175.00
CSAC National Guard Assistance			
Pell Grant	5561	19,954,878	19,954,878.00
SEOG	925	469,250	469,250.00
Other Grant-Non Inst.	30	25,732	25,732.00
BIA Grant			
CAFYES Grant	26	54,365	54,365.00
Chafee Grant	27	106,753	106,753.00
Other Grant-Inst.	65	22,807	22,807.00
Total Amount		23,387,594	23,387,594.00

MIF20F
10/11/2017 4:27:45pm

Grossmont College
2017 MIS Final FA
Summary

Page: 3

Financial Aid Type	Headcount	Amount	Total w/cents
Perkins Loan			
EOPS Loan			
SSL - Subsidized			
SSL - Unsubsidized			
Other Loan-Inst.			

Other Loan-Non Inst.	3	31,288	31,288.00
PLUS loan, parent loan for undergrad			
Federal Direct Student Loan - Sub	376	1,099,350	1,099,350.00
Federal Direct Student Loan - Unsub	185	622,007	622,007.00
Scholarship-Inst.	75	36,356	36,356.00
Scholarship-Non Inst.	159	165,807	165,807.00
Scholarship-Unknown			
SWS (Ca. Workstudy)			
EOPS Work Study			
FWS - Federal Share	127	231,237	231,207.75
Other work study/match	142	184,558	184,532.25
Total Amount		2,370,603	2,370,548.00
Grand Total		35,972,198	35,972,143.00
Zero Dollar BOGWs			
College FA Records written:	41734		

APPENDIX D – Financial Aid Student Success Data (Retention, Persistence, Course Success and Completion)

Grossmont College Comparison of All Financial Aid and All Other Students: Demographics Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	All Financial Aid Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	8,647	46.0	8,455	45.7	10,165	54.0	10,062	54.3
Gender	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
Female	5,164	59.7	5,062	59.9	5,531	54.4	5,493	54.6
Male	3,381	39.1	3,297	39.0	4,524	44.5	4,473	44.5
Not Reported	102	1.2	96	1.1	110	1.1	96	1.0
Ethnicity	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
Asian	715	8.3	672	7.9	1,151	11.3	1,172	11.6
Black non-Hispanic	686	7.9	669	7.9	502	4.9	466	4.6
Hispanic	3,140	36.3	3,008	35.6	3,283	32.3	3,198	31.8
White non-Hispanic	3,341	38.6	3,332	39.4	4,361	42.9	4,321	42.9
Two or More	690	8.0	699	8.3	754	7.4	772	7.7
Not Reported/Other	75	0.9	75	0.9	114	1.1	133	1.3
Age	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
Under 20	2,753	31.8	2,362	27.9	2,639	26.0	2,418	24.0
20 - 24	3,017	34.9	3,146	37.2	4,269	42.0	4,361	43.3
25 - 39	2,157	24.9	2,232	26.4	2,425	23.9	2,357	23.4
40 and older	720	8.3	715	8.5	832	8.2	926	9.2
Educational Goal	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
Degree/transfer	6,328	73.2	6,386	75.5	7,124	70.1	7,213	71.7
Vocational degree/transfer	143	1.7	152	1.8	170	1.7	173	1.7
Plan or maintain career	395	4.6	367	4.3	551	5.4	580	5.8
Basic skills	377	4.4	370	4.4	568	5.6	609	6.1
Undecided/uncollected	1,404	16.2	1,180	14.0	1,752	17.2	1,487	14.8

Note: Some students who were provided All Financial Aid in Fall 2016 were also provided All Financial Aid in Spring 2017.

Grossmont College
Comparison of All Financial Aid and All Other Students: Outcomes
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	All Financial Aid Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	8,647	46.0	8,455	45.7	10,165	54.0	10,062	54.3
Course Retention	26,670	100.0	26,231	100.0	25,520	100.0	24,873	100.0
Retained	23,428	87.8	22,684	86.5	20,394	79.9	20,420	82.1
Withdrew	3,242	12.2	3,547	13.5	5,126	20.1	4,453	17.9
Course Success	26,670	100.0	26,231	100.0	25,520	100.0	24,873	100.0
Successful	18,813	70.5	18,533	70.7	16,684	65.4	16,994	68.3
Not Successful	4,615	17.3	4,151	15.8	3,710	14.5	3,426	13.8
Withdrew	3,242	12.2	3,547	13.5	5,126	20.1	4,453	17.9
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	8,647	100.0	---	---	10,165	100.0	---	---
Persisted	6,597	76.3	---	---	6,170	60.7	---	---
Did Not Persist	2,050	23.7	---	---	3,995	39.3	---	---
Semester Units Attempted	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
0.1 - 5.9	831	9.6	863	10.2	2,698	26.5	2,747	27.3
6.0 - 8.9	1,359	15.7	1,306	15.4	2,040	20.1	1,998	19.9
9.0 - 11.9	1,640	19.0	1,604	19.0	1,865	18.3	1,833	18.2
12.0 and above	4,817	55.7	4,682	55.4	3,562	35.0	3,484	34.6
Mean Units Attempted	10.9		11.1		8.9		9.0	
Semester Units Completed	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
0.0	895	10.4	950	11.2	2,280	22.4	1,975	19.6
0.1 - 5.9	1,612	18.6	1,588	18.8	2,659	26.2	2,782	27.6
6.0 - 8.9	1,714	19.8	1,580	18.7	1,748	17.2	1,751	17.4
9.0 - 11.9	1,627	18.8	1,536	18.2	1,441	14.2	1,461	14.5
12.0 and above	2,799	32.4	2,801	33.1	2,037	20.0	2,093	20.8
Mean Units Completed	8.2		8.2		6.2		6.4	
Semester GPA	8,090	100.0	7,817	100.0	8,293	100.0	8,392	100.0
1.99 and below	2,005	24.8	1,887	24.1	1,902	22.9	1,745	20.8
2.00 - 2.59	1,424	17.6	1,244	15.9	1,313	15.8	1,310	15.6
2.60 - 2.99	786	9.7	769	9.8	739	8.9	705	8.4
3.00 and above	3,875	47.9	3,917	50.1	4,339	52.3	4,632	55.2
Mean Semester GPA	2.55		2.60		2.64		2.71	

Comparison of All Financial Aid and All Other Students: Outcomes by Ethnicity
Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	All Financial Aid Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
Asian	715	8.3	672	7.9	1,151	11.3	1,172	11.6
Black non-Hispanic	686	7.9	669	7.9	502	4.9	466	4.6
Hispanic	3,140	36.3	3,008	35.6	3,283	32.3	3,198	31.8
White non-Hispanic	3,341	38.6	3,332	39.4	4,361	42.9	4,321	42.9
Two or More	690	8.0	699	8.3	754	7.4	772	7.7
Not Reported/Other	75	0.9	75	0.9	114	1.1	133	1.3
Enrollments	26,670	100.0	26,231	100.0	25,520	100.0	24,873	100.0
Asian	2,217	8.3	2,090	8.0	3,404	13.3	3,405	13.7
Black non-Hispanic	2,285	8.6	2,172	8.3	1,218	4.8	1,137	4.6
Hispanic	10,014	37.5	9,721	37.1	7,988	31.3	7,686	30.9
White non-Hispanic	9,778	36.7	9,859	37.6	10,783	42.3	10,527	42.3
Two or More	2,175	8.2	2,184	8.3	1,840	7.2	1,792	7.2
Not Reported/Other	201	0.8	205	0.8	287	1.1	326	1.3
Course Retention Rate	87.8		86.5		79.9		82.1	
Asian	88.1		87.2		85.0		85.3	
Black non-Hispanic	83.4		81.4		71.4		77.2	
Hispanic	87.3		85.3		75.6		79.0	
White non-Hispanic	89.9		88.7		82.7		84.2	
Two or More	86.5		86.1		77.9		79.8	
Not Reported/Other	80.1		86.8		83.6		85.6	
Course Success Rate	70.5		70.7		65.4		68.3	
Asian	73.6		74.3		70.5		71.0	
Black non-Hispanic	59.2		57.4		49.3		57.3	
Hispanic	66.8		66.4		58.7		62.6	
White non-Hispanic	77.1		77.1		70.8		73.1	
Two or More	67.9		70.2		63.1		65.9	
Not Reported/Other	62.2		68.3		70.0		72.7	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	76.3		---		60.7		---	
Asian	77.6		---		65.6		---	
Black non-Hispanic	70.3		---		47.0		---	
Hispanic	77.1		---		58.2		---	
White non-Hispanic	76.9		---		63.1		---	
Two or More	74.5		---		58.9		---	
Not Reported/Other	73.3		---		62.3		---	

	All Financial Aid Students		All Other Students	
	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Mean Semester Units Attempted				
Asian	10.9	11.1	8.9	9.0
Black non-Hispanic	11.0	11.0	10.3	10.3
Hispanic	11.0	10.8	8.4	8.9
White non-Hispanic	10.8	11.0	8.6	8.6
Two or More	10.9	11.2	8.9	9.0
Not Reported/Other	10.8	10.8	8.7	8.5
	9.9	11.1	8.6	8.6
Mean Semester Units Completed				
Asian	8.2	8.3	6.2	6.4
Black non-Hispanic	8.5	8.6	7.6	7.7
Hispanic	7.0	6.8	4.5	5.6
White non-Hispanic	7.7	7.7	5.4	5.7
Two or More	8.8	9.1	6.6	6.8
Not Reported/Other	7.9	7.9	5.8	5.9
	7.1	8.7	6.4	6.6
Mean Semester GPA				
Asian	2.55	2.60	2.64	2.71
Black non-Hispanic	2.67	2.71	2.69	2.74
Hispanic	2.11	2.16	2.15	2.31
White non-Hispanic	2.35	2.39	2.42	2.49
Two or More	2.84	2.87	2.84	2.90
Not Reported/Other	2.50	2.56	2.59	2.68
	2.70	2.70	2.74	2.81

Grossmont College
Comparison of All Financial Aid and All Other Students: Outcomes by Gender
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	All Financial Aid Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	8,647	100.0	8,455	100.0	10,165	100.0	10,062	100.0
Female	5,164	59.7	5,062	59.9	5,531	54.4	5,493	54.6
Male	3,381	39.1	3,297	39.0	4,524	44.5	4,473	44.5
Not Reported	102	1.2	96	1.1	110	1.1	96	1.0
Enrollments	26,670	100.0	26,231	100.0	25,520	100.0	24,873	100.0
Female	15,849	59.4	15,628	59.6	13,552	53.1	13,143	52.8
Male	10,486	39.3	10,297	39.3	11,706	45.9	11,493	46.2
Not Reported	335	1.3	306	1.2	262	1.0	237	1.0
Course Retention Rate	87.8		86.5		79.9		82.1	
Female	87.9		87.1		79.1		82.4	
Male	87.7		85.5		80.8		81.8	
Not Reported	89.0		90.2		82.8		81.9	
Course Success Rate	70.5		70.7		65.4		68.3	
Female	71.7		72.2		66.5		70.6	
Male	68.9		68.2		64.1		65.8	
Not Reported	70.4		73.2		67.6		63.7	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	76.3		---		60.7		---	
Female	76.6		---		60.5		---	
Male	75.9		---		60.9		---	
Not Reported	72.5		---		59.1		---	
Mean Semester Units Attempted	10.9		11.1		8.9		9.0	
Female	10.7		10.9		8.6		8.6	
Male	11.1		11.3		9.4		9.5	
Not Reported	11.0		11.2		8.7		9.0	
Mean Semester Units Completed	8.2		8.3		6.2		6.4	
Female	8.1		8.3		6.0		6.3	
Male	8.2		8.2		6.5		6.6	
Not Reported	8.3		8.5		6.1		6.2	
Mean Semester GPA	2.55		2.60		2.64		2.71	
Female	2.62		2.67		2.75		2.84	
Male	2.45		2.49		2.52		2.57	
Not Reported	2.6		2.6		2.70		2.47	

Grossmont College
Comparison of College Work Study and All Other Students: Demographics
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	College Work Study Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	103	0.5	101	0.5	18,709	99.5	18,416	99.5
Gender	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
Female	73	70.9	70	69.3	10,622	56.8	10,485	56.9
Male	30	29.1	31	30.7	7,875	42.1	7,739	42.0
Not Reported	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	1.1	192	1.0
Ethnicity	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
Asian	8	7.8	8	7.9	1,858	9.9	1,836	10.0
Black non-Hispanic	4	3.9	5	5.0	1,184	6.3	1,130	6.1
Hispanic	14	13.6	13	12.9	6,409	34.3	6,193	33.6
White non-Hispanic	71	68.9	69	68.3	7,631	40.8	7,584	41.2
Two or More	5	4.9	5	5.0	1,439	7.7	1,466	8.0
Not Reported/Other	1	1.0	1	1.0	188	1.0	207	1.1
Age	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
Under 20	24	23.3	18	17.8	5,368	28.7	4,762	25.9
20 - 24	16	15.5	21	20.8	7,270	38.9	7,486	40.6
25 - 39	36	35.0	36	35.6	4,546	24.3	4,553	24.7
40 and older	27	26.2	26	25.7	1,525	8.2	1,615	8.8
Educational Goal	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
Degree/transfer	69	67.0	69	68.3	13,383	71.5	13,530	73.5
Vocational degree/transfer	2	1.9	1	1.0	311	1.7	324	1.8
Plan or maintain career	0	0.0	0	0.0	946	5.1	947	5.1
Basic skills	10	9.7	10	9.9	935	5.0	969	5.3
Undecided/uncollected	22	21.4	21	20.8	3,134	16.8	2,646	14.4

Note: Some students who were provided College Work Study in Fall 2016 were also provided College Work Study in Spring 2017.

Grossmont College
Comparison of College Work Study and All Other Students: Outcomes
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	College Work Study Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	103	0.5	101	0.5	18,709	99.5	18,416	99.5
Course Retention	348	100.0	335	100.0	95,345	100.0	50,769	100.0
Retained	319	91.7	297	88.7	51,842	54.4	42,807	84.3
Withdraw	29	8.3	38	11.3	43,503	45.6	7,962	15.7
Course Success	348	100.0	335	100.0	51,842	100.0	50,769	100.0
Successful	300	86.2	282	84.2	35,197	67.9	35,245	69.4
Not Successful	19	5.5	15	4.5	8,306	16.0	7,562	14.9
Withdraw	29	8.3	38	11.3	8,339	16.1	7,962	15.7
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	103	100.0	---	---	18,709	100.0	---	---
Persisted	100	97.1	---	---	12,667	67.7	---	---
Did Not Persist	3	2.9	---	---	6,042	32.3	---	---
Semester Units Attempted	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
0.1 - 5.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	3,529	18.9	3,610	19.6
6.0 - 8.9	9	8.7	13	12.9	3,390	18.1	3,291	17.9
9.0 - 11.9	8	7.8	11	10.9	3,497	18.7	3,426	18.6
12.0 and above	86	83.5	77	76.2	8,293	44.3	8,089	43.9
Mean Units Attempted	12.6		12.6		9.8		9.9	
Semester Units Completed	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
0.0	2	1.9	6	5.9	3,173	17.0	2,919	15.9
0.1 - 5.9	1	1.0	3	3.0	4,270	22.8	4,367	23.7
6.0 - 8.9	19	18.4	16	15.8	3,443	18.4	3,315	18.0
9.0 - 11.9	14	13.6	15	14.9	3,054	16.3	2,982	16.2
12.0 and above	67	65.0	61	60.4	4,769	25.5	4,833	26.2
Mean Units Completed	11.1		11.0		7.1		7.3	
Semester GPA	99	100.0	94	100.0	16,284	100.0	16,115	100.0
1.99 and below	6	6.1	7	7.4	3,901	24.0	3,625	22.5
2.00 - 2.59	10	10.1	6	6.4	2,727	16.7	2,548	15.8
2.60 - 2.99	7	7.1	7	7.4	1,518	9.3	1,467	9.1
3.00 and above	76	76.8	74	78.7	8,138	50.0	8,475	52.6
Mean Semester GPA	3.38		3.32		2.60		2.66	

Comparison of College Work Study and All Other Students: Outcomes by Ethnicity
Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	College Work Study Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
Asian	8	7.8	8	7.9	1,858	9.9	1,836	10.0
Black non-Hispanic	4	3.9	5	5.0	1,184	6.3	1,130	6.1
Hispanic	14	13.6	13	12.9	6,409	34.3	6,193	33.6
White non-Hispanic	71	68.9	69	68.3	7,631	40.8	7,584	41.2
Two or More	5	4.9	5	5.0	1,439	7.7	1,466	8.0
Not Reported/Other	1	1.0	1	1.0	188	1.0	207	1.1
Enrollments	348	100.0	335	100.0	51,842	100.0	50,769	100.0
Asian	34	9.8	30	9.0	5,587	10.8	5,465	10.8
Black non-Hispanic	16	4.6	17	5.1	3,487	6.7	3,292	6.5
Hispanic	54	15.5	46	13.7	17,948	34.6	17,361	34.2
White non-Hispanic	226	64.9	226	67.5	20,335	39.2	20,160	39.7
Two or More	14	4.0	14	4.2	4,001	7.7	3,962	7.8
Not Reported/Other	4	1.1	2	0.6	484	0.9	529	1.0
Course Retention Rate	91.7		88.7		83.9		84.3	
Asian	76.5		90.0		86.3		86.0	
Black non-Hispanic	75.0		64.7		79.2		80.0	
Hispanic	96.3		82.6		82.0		82.5	
White non-Hispanic	93.4		90.7		86.0		86.3	
Two or More	100.0		100.0		82.5		83.2	
Not Reported/Other	100.0		100.0		82.0		86.0	
Course Success Rate	86.2		84.2		67.9		69.4	
Asian	73.5		70.0		71.7		72.3	
Black non-Hispanic	50.0		52.9		55.7		57.4	
Hispanic	92.6		76.1		63.1		64.7	
White non-Hispanic	89.8		88.9		73.6		74.9	
Two or More	78.6		100.0		65.6		68.1	
Not Reported/Other	75.0		100.0		66.7		70.9	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	97.1		---		67.7		---	
Asian	100.0		---		70.1		---	
Black non-Hispanic	100.0		---		60.3		---	
Hispanic	92.9		---		67.4		---	
White non-Hispanic	97.2		---		68.8		---	
Two or More	100.0		---		66.2		---	
Not Reported/Other	100.0		---		66.5		---	

	College Work Study Students		All Other Students	
	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Mean Semester Units Attempted				
Asian	12.6	12.6	9.8	9.9
Black non-Hispanic	14.8	13.3	10.5	10.5
Hispanic	13.3	12.0	9.9	10.0
White non-Hispanic	12.6	12.6	9.7	9.8
Two or More	12.5	12.7	9.8	9.9
Not Reported/Other	9.8	11.4	9.7	9.6
	12.0	9.0	9.1	9.5
Mean Semester Units Completed				
Asian	11.2	11.0	7.1	7.3
Black non-Hispanic	11.3	10.2	8.0	8.0
Hispanic	8.0	6.4	5.9	6.3
White non-Hispanic	11.7	10.5	6.5	6.7
Two or More	11.4	11.5	7.5	7.7
Not Reported/Other	9.0	11.4	6.8	6.9
	12.0	9.0	6.6	7.3
Mean Semester GPA				
Asian	3.38	3.32	2.60	2.66
Black non-Hispanic	3.23	2.62	2.68	2.73
Hispanic	2.24	2.41	2.13	2.21
White non-Hispanic	2.93	2.95	2.38	2.44
Two or More	3.59	3.50	2.83	2.88
Not Reported/Other	2.87	3.46	2.54	2.62
	2.00	3.33	2.73	2.76

Grossmont College
Comparison of College Work Study and All Other Students: Outcomes by Gender
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	College Work Study Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	103	100.0	101	100.0	18,709	100.0	18,416	100.0
Female	73	70.9	70	69.3	10,622	56.8	10,485	56.9
Male	30	29.1	31	30.7	7,875	42.1	7,739	42.0
Not Reported	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	1.1	192	1.0
Enrollments	348	100.0	335	100.0	51,842	100.0	50,769	100.0
Female	248	71.3	229	68.4	29,153	56.2	28,542	56.2
Male	100	28.7	106	31.6	22,092	42.6	21,684	42.7
Not Reported	0	0.0	0	0.0	597	1.2	543	1.1
Course Retention Rate		91.7		88.7		83.9		84.3
Female		93.1		88.2		83.8		84.9
Male		88.0		89.6		84.0		83.5
Not Reported		---		---		86.3		86.6
Course Success Rate		86.2		84.2		67.9		69.4
Female		87.9		86.0		69.1		71.4
Male		82.0		80.2		66.3		66.8
Not Reported		---		---		69.2		69.1
Fall-to-Spring Persistence		97.1		---		67.7		---
Female		97.3		---		68.1		---
Male		96.7		---		67.2		---
Not Reported		---		---		65.6		---
Mean Semester Units Attempted		12.6		12.6		9.8		9.9
Female		12.7		12.9		9.6		9.7
Male		12.4		12.0		10.1		10.2
Not Reported		---		---		9.8		10.1
Mean Semester Units Completed		11.2		11.0		7.1		7.3
Female		11.3		11.5		7.0		7.2
Male		10.7		9.9		7.2		7.3
Not Reported		---		---		7.2		7.4
Mean Semester GPA		3.38		3.32		2.60		2.66
Female		3.40		3.41		2.68		2.75
Male		3.34		3.10		2.49		2.53
Not Reported		---		---		2.62		2.54

Grossmont College
Comparison of Dreamkeepers and All Other Students: Demographics
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Dreamkeepers Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	40	0.2	36	0.2	18,772	99.8	18,481	99.8
Gender	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
Female	34	85.0	30	83.3	10,661	56.8	10,525	57.0
Male	6	15.0	6	16.7	7,899	42.1	7,764	42.0
Not Reported	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	1.1	192	1.0
Ethnicity	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	1,866	9.9	1,844	10.0
Black non-Hispanic	8	20.0	7	19.4	1,180	6.3	1,128	6.1
Hispanic	14	35.0	12	33.3	6,409	34.1	6,194	33.5
White non-Hispanic	14	35.0	11	30.6	7,688	41.0	7,642	41.4
Two or More	4	10.0	6	16.7	1,440	7.7	1,465	7.9
Not Reported/Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	189	1.0	208	1.1
Age	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
Under 20	2	5.0	2	5.6	5,390	28.7	4,778	25.9
20 - 24	8	20.0	6	16.7	7,278	38.8	7,501	40.6
25 - 39	17	42.5	15	41.7	4,565	24.3	4,574	24.7
40 and older	13	32.5	13	36.1	1,539	8.2	1,628	8.8
Educational Goal	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
Degree/transfer	20	50.0	15	41.7	13,432	71.6	13,584	73.5
Vocational degree/transfer	4	10.0	5	13.9	309	1.6	320	1.7
Plan or maintain career	2	5.0	3	8.3	944	5.0	944	5.1
Basic skills	3	7.5	3	8.3	942	5.0	976	5.3
Undecided/uncollected	11	27.5	10	27.8	3,145	16.8	2,657	14.4

Note: Some students who were provided Dreamkeepers in Fall 2016 were also provided Dreamkeepers in Spring 2017.

Grossmont College
Comparison of Dreamkeepers and All Other Students: Outcomes
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Dreamkeepers Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	40	0.2	36	0.2	18,772	99.8	18,481	99.8
Course Retention	191	100.0	160	100.0	51,999	100.0	50,944	100.0
Retained	178	93.2	144	90.0	43,644	83.9	42,960	84.3
Withdrew	13	6.8	16	10.0	8,355	16.1	7,984	15.7
Course Success	191	100.0	160	100.0	51,999	100.0	50,944	100.0
Successful	158	82.7	119	74.4	35,339	68.0	35,408	69.5
Not Successful	20	10.5	25	15.6	8,305	16.0	7,552	14.8
Withdrew	13	6.8	16	10.0	8,355	16.1	7,984	15.7
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	40	100.0	---	---	18,772	100.0	---	---
Persisted	32	80.0	---	---	12,735	67.8	---	---
Did Not Persist	8	20.0	---	---	6,037	32.2	---	---
Semester Units Attempted	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
0.1 - 5.9	1	2.5	3	8.3	3,528	18.8	3,607	19.5
6.0 - 8.9	3	7.5	4	11.1	3,396	18.1	3,300	17.9
9.0 - 11.9	13	32.5	5	13.9	3,492	18.6	3,432	18.6
12.0 and above	23	57.5	24	66.7	8,356	44.5	8,142	44.1
Mean Units Attempted	12.1		12.3		9.8		9.9	
Semester Units Completed	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
0.0	3	7.5	4	11.1	3,172	16.9	2,921	15.8
0.1 - 5.9	4	10.0	8	22.2	4,267	22.7	4,362	23.6
6.0 - 8.9	4	10.0	3	8.3	3,458	18.4	3,328	18.0
9.0 - 11.9	11	27.5	6	16.7	3,057	16.3	2,991	16.2
12.0 and above	18	45.0	15	41.7	4,818	25.7	4,879	26.4
Mean Units Completed	10.0		9.0		7.1		7.3	
Semester GPA	39	100.0	34	100.0	16,344	100.0	16,175	100.0
1.99 and below	8	20.5	6	17.6	3,899	23.9	3,626	22.4
2.00 - 2.59	7	17.9	7	20.6	2,730	16.7	2,547	15.7
2.60 - 2.99	5	12.8	2	5.9	1,520	9.3	1,472	9.1
3.00 and above	19	48.7	19	55.9	8,195	50.1	8,530	52.7
Mean Semester GPA	2.71		2.63		2.60		2.66	

Comparison of Dreamkeepers and All Other Students: Outcomes by Ethnicity
Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Dreamkeepers Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	1,866	9.9	1,844	10.0
Black non-Hispanic	8	20.0	7	19.4	1,180	6.3	1,128	6.1
Hispanic	14	35.0	12	33.3	6,409	34.1	6,194	33.5
White non-Hispanic	14	35.0	11	30.6	7,688	41.0	7,642	41.4
Two or More	4	10.0	6	16.7	1,440	7.7	1,465	7.9
Not Reported/Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	189	1.0	208	1.1
Enrollments	191	100.0	160	100.0	51,999	100.0	50,944	100.0
Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	5,621	10.8	5,495	10.8
Black non-Hispanic	40	20.9	27	16.9	3,463	6.7	3,282	6.4
Hispanic	72	37.7	57	35.6	17,930	34.5	17,350	34.1
White non-Hispanic	60	31.4	47	29.4	20,501	39.4	20,339	39.9
Two or More	19	9.9	29	18.1	3,996	7.7	3,947	7.7
Not Reported/Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	488	0.9	531	1.0
Course Retention Rate	93.2		90.0		83.9		84.3	
Asian	---		---		86.2		86.0	
Black non-Hispanic	92.5		88.9		79.1		79.9	
Hispanic	94.4		91.2		82.0		82.5	
White non-Hispanic	91.7		91.5		86.1		86.4	
Two or More	94.7		86.2		82.5		83.2	
Not Reported/Other	---		---		82.2		86.1	
Course Success Rate	82.7		74.4		68.0		69.5	
Asian	---		---		71.7		72.3	
Black non-Hispanic	85.0		51.9		55.4		57.4	
Hispanic	87.5		78.9		63.1		64.7	
White non-Hispanic	76.7		76.6		73.8		75.1	
Two or More	78.9		82.8		65.6		68.2	
Not Reported/Other	---		---		66.8		71.0	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	80		---		67.8		---	
Asian	---		---		70.2		---	
Black non-Hispanic	87.5		---		60.3		---	
Hispanic	78.6		---		67.4		---	
White non-Hispanic	71.4		---		69.1		---	
Two or More	100.0		---		66.2		---	
Not Reported/Other	---		---		66.7		---	

	Dreamkeepers Students		All Other Students	
	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Mean Semester Units Attempted	12.1	12.3	9.8	9.9
Asian	---	---	10.6	10.5
Black non-Hispanic	13.4	12.9	9.9	10.0
Hispanic	12.3	12.4	9.7	9.8
White non-Hispanic	11.5	11.6	9.8	9.9
Two or More	10.8	12.9	9.7	9.5
Not Reported/Other	---	---	9.2	9.5
Mean Semester Units Completed	10.0	9.0	7.1	7.3
Asian	---	---	8.0	8.0
Black non-Hispanic	11.2	7.4	5.9	6.3
Hispanic	10.8	8.6	6.5	6.7
White non-Hispanic	9.1	9.8	7.6	7.7
Two or More	7.8	10.1	6.8	7.0
Not Reported/Other	---	---	6.7	7.3
Mean Semester GPA	2.71	2.63	2.60	2.66
Asian	---	---	2.69	2.73
Black non-Hispanic	2.49	1.69	2.12	2.22
Hispanic	2.98	2.90	2.38	2.44
White non-Hispanic	2.71	2.92	2.84	2.89
Two or More	2.29	2.56	2.54	2.62
Not Reported/Other	---	---	2.72	2.76

Grossmont College
Comparison of Dreamkeepers and All Other Students: Outcomes by Gender
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Dreamkeepers Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	40	100.0	36	100.0	18,772	100.0	18,481	100.0
Female	34	85.0	30	83.3	10,661	56.8	10,525	57.0
Male	6	15.0	6	16.7	7,899	42.1	7,764	42.0
Not Reported	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	1.1	192	1.0
Enrollments	191	100.0	160	100.0	51,999	100.0	50,944	100.0
Female	172	90.1	130	81.3	29,229	56.2	28,641	56.2
Male	19	9.9	30	18.8	22,173	42.6	21,760	42.7
Not Reported	0	0.0	0	0.0	597	1.1	543	1.1
Course Retention Rate	93.2		90.0		83.9		84.3	
Female	93.0		90.8		83.8		84.9	
Male	94.7		86.7		84.1		83.5	
Not Reported	---		---		86.6		86.6	
Course Success Rate	82.7		74.4		68		69.5	
Female	85.5		75.4		69.2		71.5	
Male	57.9		70.0		66.3		66.9	
Not Reported	---		---		69.2		69.1	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	80.0		---		67.8		---	
Female	79.4		---		68.3		---	
Male	83.3		---		67.3		---	
Not Reported	---		---		65.6		---	
Mean Semester Units Attempted	12.1		12.3		9.8		9.9	
Female	12.2		12.0		9.6		9.7	
Male	11.8		14.0		10.1		10.2	
Not Reported	---		---		9.8		10.1	
Mean Semester Units Completed	10.0		9.0		7.1		7.3	
Female	10.5		8.6		7.0		7.3	
Male	6.8		10.8		7.2		7.3	
Not Reported	---		---		7.2		7.4	
Mean Semester GPA	2.71		2.63		2.60		2.66	
Female	2.91		2.69		2.68		2.76	
Male	1.62		2.39		2.49		2.53	
Not Reported	---		---		2.62		2.54	

Grossmont College
Comparison of Full-time Student Success Grant and All Other Students: Demographics
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Full-time Student Success Grant Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	817	4.3	801	4.3	17,995	95.7	17,716	95.7
Gender	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
Female	530	64.9	524	65.4	10,165	56.5	10,031	56.6
Male	280	34.3	266	33.2	7,625	42.4	7,504	42.4
Not Reported	7	0.9	11	1.4	205	1.1	181	1.0
Ethnicity	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
Asian	83	10.2	82	10.2	1,783	9.9	1,762	9.9
Black non-Hispanic	35	4.3	33	4.1	1,153	6.4	1,102	6.2
Hispanic	320	39.2	318	39.7	6,103	33.9	5,888	33.2
White non-Hispanic	326	39.9	313	39.1	7,376	41.0	7,340	41.4
Two or More	50	6.1	52	6.5	1,394	7.7	1,419	8.0
Not Reported/Other	3	0.4	3	0.4	186	1.0	205	1.2
Age	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
Under 20	495	60.6	445	55.6	4,897	27.2	4,335	24.5
20 - 24	179	21.9	212	26.5	7,107	39.5	7,295	41.2
25 - 39	87	10.6	84	10.5	4,495	25.0	4,505	25.4
40 and older	56	6.9	60	7.5	1,496	8.3	1,581	8.9
Educational Goal	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
Degree/transfer	663	81.2	650	81.1	12,789	71.1	12,949	73.1
Vocational degree/transfer	13	1.6	12	1.5	300	1.7	313	1.8
Plan or maintain career	13	1.6	16	2.0	933	5.2	931	5.3
Basic skills	34	4.2	30	3.7	911	5.1	949	5.4
Undecided/uncollected	94	11.5	93	11.6	3,062	17.0	2,574	14.5

Note: Some students who were provided Full-time Student Success Grant in Fall 2016 were also provided Full-time Student Success

Grossmont College
Comparison of Full-time Student Success Grant and All Other Students: Outcomes
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Full-time Student Success Grant Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Students	817	4.3	801	4.3	17,995	95.7	17,716	95.7
Course Retention	3,211	100.0	3,226	100.0	48,979	100.0	47,878	100.0
Retained	3,015	93.9	2,983	92.5	40,807	83.3	40,121	83.8
Withdrew	196	6.1	243	7.5	8,172	16.7	7,757	16.2
Course Success	3,211	100.0	3,226	100.0	48,979	100.0	47,878	100.0
Successful	2,666	83.0	2,611	80.9	32,831	67.0	32,916	68.7
Not Successful	349	10.9	372	11.5	7,976	16.3	7,205	15.0
Withdrew	196	6.1	243	7.5	8,172	16.7	7,757	16.2
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	817	100.0	---	---	17,995	100.0	---	---
Persisted	775	94.9	---	---	11,992	66.6	---	---
Did Not Persist	42	5.1	---	---	6,003	33.4	---	---
Semester Units Attempted	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
0.1 - 5.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	3,529	19.6	3,610	20.4
6.0 - 8.9	0	0.0	1	0.1	3,399	18.9	3,303	18.6
9.0 - 11.9	15	1.8	11	1.4	3,490	19.4	3,426	19.3
12.0 and above	802	98.2	789	98.5	7,577	42.1	7,377	41.6
Mean Units Attempted	13.5		14.0		9.7		9.7	
Semester Units Completed	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
0.0	21	2.6	24	3.0	3,154	17.5	2,901	16.4
0.1 - 5.9	25	3.1	30	3.7	4,246	23.6	4,340	24.5
6.0 - 8.9	65	8.0	56	7.0	3,397	18.9	3,275	18.5
9.0 - 11.9	108	13.2	118	14.7	2,960	16.4	2,879	16.3
12.0 and above	598	73.2	573	71.5	4,238	23.6	4,321	24.4
Mean Units Completed	11.7		12.0		6.9		7.1	
Semester GPA	804	100.0	792	100.0	15,579	100.0	15,417	100.0
1.99 and below	112	13.9	134	16.9	3,795	24.4	3,498	22.7
2.00 - 2.59	128	15.9	120	15.2	2,609	16.7	2,434	15.8
2.60 - 2.99	105	13.1	101	12.8	1,420	9.1	1,373	8.9
3.00 and above	459	57.1	437	55.2	7,755	49.8	8,112	52.6
Mean Semester GPA	2.91		2.88		2.58		2.65	

**Comparison of Full-time Student Success Grant and All Other Students: Outcomes by Ethnicity
Fall 2016 - Spring 2017**

	Full-time Student Success Grant Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
Asian	83	10.2	82	10.2	1,783	9.9	1,762	9.9
Black non-Hispanic	35	4.3	33	4.1	1,153	6.4	1,102	6.2
Hispanic	320	39.2	318	39.7	6,103	33.9	5,888	33.2
White non-Hispanic	326	39.9	313	39.1	7,376	41.0	7,340	41.4
Two or More	50	6.1	52	6.5	1,394	7.7	1,419	8.0
Not Reported/Other	3	0.4	3	0.4	186	1.0	205	1.2
Enrollments	3,211	100.0	3,226	100.0	48,979	100.0	47,878	100.0
Asian	316	9.8	316	9.8	5,305	10.8	5,179	10.8
Black non-Hispanic	146	4.5	144	4.5	3,357	6.9	3,165	6.6
Hispanic	1,331	41.5	1,357	42.1	16,671	34.0	16,050	33.5
White non-Hispanic	1,194	37.2	1,176	36.5	19,367	39.5	19,210	40.1
Two or More	211	6.6	218	6.8	3,804	7.8	3,758	7.8
Not Reported/Other	13	0.4	15	0.5	475	1.0	516	1.1
Course Retention Rate	93.9		92.5		83.3		83.8	
Asian	95.3		93.0		85.7		85.6	
Black non-Hispanic	91.1		84.0		78.7		79.8	
Hispanic	93.0		90.9		81.2		81.8	
White non-Hispanic	95.7		95.2		85.5		85.8	
Two or More	89.6		92.7		82.2		82.7	
Not Reported/Other	84.6		80.0		82.1		86.2	
Course Success Rate	83.0		80.9		67.0		68.7	
Asian	84.5		84.5		71.0		71.5	
Black non-Hispanic	71.9		63.2		55.0		57.1	
Hispanic	78.4		75.5		62.0		63.8	
White non-Hispanic	89.2		88.3		72.8		74.3	
Two or More	86.3		83.9		64.5		67.3	
Not Reported/Other	30.8		46.7		67.8		71.7	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	94.9		---		66.7		---	
Asian	92.8		---		69.2		---	
Black non-Hispanic	94.3		---		59.4		---	
Hispanic	94.7		---		66.0		---	
White non-Hispanic	95.7		---		67.9		---	
Two or More	94.0		---		65.4		---	
Not Reported/Other	100.0		---		66.1		---	

	Full-time Student Success Grant Students		All Other Students	
	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Mean Semester Units Attempted	13.5	14.0	9.7	9.7
Asian	13.5	13.6	10.4	10.4
Black non-Hispanic	13.2	13.9	9.8	9.9
Hispanic	13.5	14.2	9.5	9.6
White non-Hispanic	13.6	14.0	9.6	9.8
Two or More	14.0	14.2	9.5	9.4
Not Reported/Other	13.0	15.2	9.1	9.5
Mean Semester Units Completed	11.7	12.0	6.9	7.1
Asian	11.9	11.9	7.8	7.8
Black non-Hispanic	10.1	9.9	5.8	6.2
Hispanic	11.2	11.3	6.3	6.5
White non-Hispanic	12.4	12.8	7.4	7.6
Two or More	12.2	12.4	6.6	6.7
Not Reported/Other	6.7	7.8	6.7	7.3
Mean Semester GPA	2.91	2.88	2.58	2.65
Asian	2.94	3.05	2.67	2.71
Black non-Hispanic	2.29	2.30	2.12	2.21
Hispanic	2.65	2.59	2.36	2.43
White non-Hispanic	3.20	3.18	2.82	2.88
Two or More	3.14	3.01	2.52	2.60
Not Reported/Other	1.46	2.09	2.75	2.78

Grossmont College
 Comparison of Full-time Student Success Grant and All Other Students: Outcomes by Gender
 Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

	Full-time Student Success Grant Students				All Other Students			
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2016		Spring 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students	817	100.0	801	100.0	17,995	100.0	17,716	100.0
Female	530	64.9	524	65.4	10,165	56.5	10,031	56.6
Male	280	34.3	266	33.2	7,625	42.4	7,504	42.4
Not Reported	7	0.9	11	1.4	205	1.1	181	1.0
Enrollments	3,211	100.0	3,226	100.0	48,979	100.0	47,878	100.0
Female	2,121	66.1	2,127	65.9	27,280	55.7	26,644	55.6
Male	1,064	33.1	1,055	32.7	21,128	43.1	20,735	43.3
Not Reported	26	0.8	44	1.4	571	1.2	499	1.0
Course Retention Rate	93.9		92.5		83.3		83.8	
Female	93.4		92.4		83.1		84.3	
Male	94.6		92.8		83.5		83.1	
Not Reported	100.0		88.6		85.6		86.4	
Course Success Rate	83.0		80.9		67.0		68.7	
Female	81.9		80.6		68.3		70.8	
Male	85.0		81.6		65.4		66.2	
Not Reported	92.3		81.8		68.1		67.9	
Fall-to-Spring Persistence	94.9		---		66.6		---	
Female	94.5		---		66.9		---	
Male	95.4		---		66.3		---	
Not Reported	100.0		---		64.4		---	
Mean Semester Units Attempted	13.5		14.0		9.7		9.7	
Female	13.6		13.9		9.4		9.5	
Male	13.5		14.3		10.0		10.1	
Not Reported	13.3		14.5		9.7		9.8	
Mean Semester Units Completed	11.7		12.0		6.9		7.1	
Female	11.6		11.9		6.8		7.0	
Male	11.9		12.2		7.0		7.1	
Not Reported	12.1		11.6		7.0		7.1	
Mean Semester GPA	2.91		2.88		2.58		2.65	
Female	2.88		2.88		2.67		2.75	
Male	2.95		2.87		2.47		2.52	
Not Reported	2.99		3.04		2.61		2.50	

APPENDIX E – Student Focus Group Data (Fall 2017)



Grossmont College

Student Focus Groups:

Campus Climate

Ileri Valenzuela
Senior Researcher

January 2018
www.rpgroup.org

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	7
<i>Project Overview</i>	7
<i>Organization of This Report</i>	7
Section 1: Areas of Inquiry	7
<i>Research Questions</i>	7
<i>Limitations of Focus Group Findings</i>	8
Section 2: Participant Recruitment Process.....	9
Section 3: Participant Characteristics	10
Section 4: Key Findings: Common Themes across Focus Groups.....	10
<i>Focus Group Themes</i>	10
<i>Theme 1: Sources of Motivation to Attend College.....</i>	11
Theme 2: Experiences of Historically-Underserved Students at Grossmont.....	14
<i>Theme 3: Family and Cultural Expectations</i>	16
<i>Theme 4: Sense of Overall Connection to the College.....</i>	17
<i>Theme 5: Concerns about Finances.....</i>	18
<i>Theme 6: Perspectives on Student Services and Support</i>	19
<i>Theme 7: Experiences with Academics.....</i>	25
Section 5: Recommendations	28
Sections 6: Conclusion.....	31
Appendices.....	32
Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges.....	36
<i>Project Team</i>	36

Executive Summary

In fall 2017, Grossmont College (Grossmont) engaged the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group) to conduct a series of student focus groups with African-American, Pacific Islander, Latino, Middle Eastern, former foster youth, and older returning students on the topic of campus climate. A total of 10 focus groups with 36 students were conducted. The goal of this research is to provide Grossmont administration, faculty, and staff with a better understanding of the experiences of Grossmont students, particularly students' perceptions of the college's culture to better understand how students experience and engage with faculty and staff and with the institution as a whole. The key overarching themes that emerged from the analysis of the feedback from all focus groups were:

- **Sources of motivation to attend college.** Students described a number of factors that motivated them to both attend Grossmont and persevere in pursuing their educational goals. These factors included persistence, self-motivation, and a sense of individual responsibility; support from family and friends; positive relationships with Grossmont faculty and staff; and the desire to overcome negative stereotypes.
- **Experiences of historically-underserved students at Grossmont.** Overall, students spoke positively about their experiences at Grossmont. However, several participants described feeling discriminated against and that some instructors lacked cultural sensitivity.
- **Family Obligations and Cultural Expectations.** Students from particular ethnic minority backgrounds and first-generation student participants expressed how family and cultural expectations can impact their educational experience.
- **Sense of overall connection to the college.** Students expressed feeling connected to Grossmont to varying degrees. Many identified participation in special programs and/or involvement in student clubs as the source. However, they also observed an overall lack of engagement among Grossmont students and that many students are unaware of campus activities, while others were busy juggling the demands of school, employment, and family responsibilities.
- **Concerns about finances.** Students shared their struggles balancing work, school, and life, which were compounded by transportation issues and the high cost of textbooks.
- **Perspectives on student services and support.** Students voiced strong concerns regarding a widespread lack of awareness about the resources and services available to them, as well as limitations on access to those resources when students needed them most. Students lauded the categorical programs in which they participated, such as EOPS and Puente, for providing critical resources and support. When it came general counseling, students described mixed experiences.

- **Experiences with academics.** Participants described mixed feelings regarding their academic experiences. Some expressed appreciation for particular instructors who had demonstrated a high level of overall support and understanding of their students. Others encountered faculty who seemed to have little interest in developing relationships with students or understanding the difficulties they faced outside of the classroom.

The seven recommendations below provide Grossmont faculty, staff, and administrators a powerful opportunity to consider actions the college can take to best support student success.

1. *Explore changes to policies and practices in general counseling that would enhance student/counselor relationships and increase the delivery of accurate information and helpful services.*

While it is clear that budgetary concerns and a potentially unwieldy counselor-to-student ratio must be taken into account with respect to general counseling policies and practices, numerous options are still available to Grossmont that would enhance students’ counseling experiences. For example, Grossmont could explore providing general counselors with additional professional development focused on keeping them up-to-date with the large amount of often-shifting information they must be able to accurately share with students. Additionally, a system that enabled students to consistently work with a dedicated counselor would facilitate the development of stronger relationships between students and counselors, and, in doing so, increase counselors’ capacity to understand students’ goals, help them overcome obstacles to these goals, and, ultimately, pave the path to success.

2.

Create policies and practices that respond to a thorough understanding of the challenges and constraints faced by low-income students.

Although there was no specific focus group comprising low-income students, “low-income” was indeed a characteristic with which students in all of the focus groups identified. Students discussed the myriad ways financial challenges affected their attendance, which then cascaded into affecting their academic performance. Even when students received Board of Governors’ waivers and other financial aid, they still struggled to meet both large expenses, such as textbooks, and even seemingly small expenses, such as transportation and parking.

Specifically, the college may want to look at its financial aid disbursement policies and consider programs such as book advances¹ or other types of innovations to ensure that students receive financial aid in a timely manner. Furthermore, the college could identify ways to create more jobs on campus to reduce students’ commute time and stress trying to balance work and school responsibilities. On a related matter, students suggested the college pay work-study students weekly or bi-weekly instead of monthly, which is the current practice. Finally, the college could explore less expensive and healthier food options for students.

3. Explore ways to support faculty in creating safe and inclusive learning

environments where all students feel valued and heard.

The college should consider providing professional development on inclusive teaching strategies, for example, to support and build faculty’s capacity to address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities. These teaching strategies can contribute to an overall inclusive and safe learning environment, in which students feel equally valued.

¹ This program is offered to assist students who attend colleges within the Maricopa Community College District in Phoenix, Arizona(<https://my.maricopa.edu/financial-aid-and-services/book-advances>).

4. Robustly engage students in the design, development, and testing of communication strategies regarding the resources available to support their success.

When asked to offer suggestions to the college leaders, students requested that the college improve the ways that students are informed about the resources and services available to them. However, simply announcing the availability of a certain service or program is not sufficient. Instead, a creative and recurrent communication strategy that reaches students at all levels, whether a bewildered newcomer or seasoned veteran, should be implemented. Most important to creating a strategy with the greatest chance of efficacy is that the students themselves are deeply engaged in the design, development, and testing of messages and media. After all, only students can truly know what messages will really resonate and what delivery methods and venues will be effective among their peers.

5. Ensure tutoring services are able to meet student need and demand.

Students identified one-on-one tutoring offered by the Tutoring Center as particularly impactful. To expand access, the college could explore adding more tutors and re-examining the current scheduling system to ensure students have access to tutors at times that will benefit students most.

6. Regularly capture student feedback that can be used to inform and modify processes, practices, and policies throughout the institution.

While the 10 focus groups described in this report provide a significant window into the educational experiences of Grossmont students and suggest numerous opportunities for improving the student experience, capturing student feedback as a one-off event can only provide the institution with limited insight into the perspectives of the most important members of its community—students. As such, the RP Group recommends that Grossmont develop and implement strategies to continuously and robustly incorporate student feedback into its administrative processes, such as planning for new initiatives, assessing the effectiveness of key services, introducing curricular/pedagogical innovations, or simply gathering input regarding the quality of the educational experience at Grossmont.

7. Empower everyone who works at the college to be a source for student support.

For students to feel supported both academically and socially, the college must promote a culture where all faculty, staff, and administrators feel student success is everyone's responsibility. In order to empower every person working at Grossmont to provide appropriate student support, personnel across the college must have the opportunity to discover exactly *how* they can, both in their position and as a member of the college community, directly contribute to student success. The college needs to provide professional development and support to help personnel develop the skills and knowledge necessary to support students, and continually practice these new skills with the full cultural and logistical backing of the college.

The college has an opportunity to build upon this initial step of eliciting student views by developing a systematic process to regularly engage student voices. Further understanding these experiences could help the college's efforts to improve everyone's experience at the college and effectively promote equitable student success.

Introduction

Project Overview

In fall 2017, Grossmont College (Grossmont) engaged the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group) to conduct a series of student focus groups on the topic of campus climate. The goal of this research was to gather students' perceptions of the college's culture to better understand how students experience and engage with faculty and staff and with the institution as a whole. The data gathered from the student focus groups will be used in conjunction with data gathered from focus groups conducted with faculty, staff, and administrators in spring 2017. Drawing parallels and distinctions between students' experiences with those of faculty, staff, and administrators will help inform the college's efforts to improve everyone's experience at the college.

A total of 36 students from the following populations participated in 10 focus groups held between October 17 and 20, 2017: African-American, Pacific Islander, Latino, Middle Eastern, former foster youth, and older returning students (25 and above).

Organization of This Report

This report begins with Section 1, which outlines the key research goals and limitations of the focus group findings and briefly discusses how college administrators, faculty, and staff can meaningfully interpret the findings from the focus groups. Section 2 presents an overview of the outreach and recruitment process implemented by Grossmont College's Associate Dean of Student Success and Equity to engage students in the focus groups. Section 3 describes the characteristics of the students who participated in the focus groups. Section 4 explores the key themes that emerged across the 10 focus groups and students' perspectives on these themes are shared in their own words via quotes. Section 5 offers college leaders a set of recommendations for consideration. Finally, Section 6 provides some concluding remarks.

Section 1: Areas of Inquiry

Research Goals

The student focus groups focused on exploring the topics below:

- (1) How students would describe the culture at Grossmont to someone who is unfamiliar with the college
- (2) How Grossmont culture might differ for particular groups of students
- (3) Challenges students face at Grossmont, particularly regarding registration, enrollment, relationships with faculty and staff, accessing and utilizing academic and student supports, and general experiences inside and outside the classroom
- (4) Strategies the students employed to address these challenges

- (5) Assistance students have received at the college to help overcome these challenges, and
- (6) Students' recommendations on how to better serve students and improve the overall educational experience at Grossmont College.

Transcripts from each focus group were collected and analyzed for emerging themes by RP Group researchers.

Limitations of Focus Group Findings

These focus groups provide Grossmont College with direct feedback from students regarding their academic and personal experiences at the college. Considering the perspectives of students from each of the groups targeted for this project is essential to developing a true understanding of how to respond to student needs and best promote equitable student success.

At the same time, it is critical to avoid generalizing focus group findings about any one particular group of students or the student population as a whole. Firstly, only 10 focus groups were conducted, with 36 students attending. This sample size is clearly small compared to the total number of students at Grossmont College. In addition, students who are invited to participate in or self-select to join a focus group are often those who are motivated, interested, and/or driven to provide feedback about their experiences. While their perspective is both important, one cannot ignore the fact that the perspectives of those students who chose *not* to participate remains absent. Finally, another factor that makes this group of students less representative of the overall student body is that two-thirds of the students who participated in the focus groups are in special programs, such as Puente, EOPS, CARE, Umoja, Athletics, and Guardian Scholars to name a few. Others are employed by the college as student ambassador or mentors. These students, therefore, may be more engaged and well-resourced compared to other Grossmont students and thus may not reflect the perceptions and experiences of all students at Grossmont.

Lastly, the nature of focus groups limits the degree to which findings can be generalized across an entire population. While each focus group was structured around a consistent protocol with the same set of questions, discussions went in different directions based on the personalities, interests, and dynamics among participants. As a result, certain issues were raised or more deeply explored in some focus groups, while in others these subjects did not surface, despite the fact that these topics may have been equally relevant to participants. Furthermore, group dynamics and group composition can also influence what the participants say, or do not say, during discussions.

As such, it is important to take the findings in this report seriously while simultaneously keeping in mind that they represent a limited perspective on Grossmont College. Therefore, soliciting student feedback regularly is important to obtaining a more comprehensive understanding of the general student population's experience and to empowering the college to develop strategies that enable all students to thrive.

Section 2: Participant Recruitment Process

Target Populations

A cross-functional team including the Associate Dean of Student Success and Equity, EOPS counselors, staff from Student Affairs, and the Title V outreach coordinator came together to discuss the need to gather student voices through a series of student focus groups that would take place in fall 2017. In order to determine which student groups should be invited to participate in the focus groups, the team reviewed findings from previous student focus groups conducted in 2014. Based on the team's conversation, they identified the particular student groups they wanted to know more about. These students groups included:

- African Americans
- Pacific Islanders
- Latinos
- Middle Easterners
- Former Foster Youth
- Older returning students (25 and above)

Furthermore, the team decided it would be beneficial to disaggregate the focus groups for each race/ethnicity by gender, particularly for African-American and Latino students. In addition, while there is a large Middle Eastern student population served by Grossmont, little is known about these students. Most Middle Eastern students are classified as "White" on the question of race/ethnicity on their college application. The "White" label has resulted in the inability to gather statistical data on Middle Eastern students. The dearth of information about these students' makes it difficult for the college to understand if there are unique issues or experiences among this student population that warrant the college's attention.

Finally, the student populations identified by the team were then vetted through the following councils/bodies: President's Cabinet, Student Services Council, Institutional Effectiveness Council, and Leadership Council.

Outreach and Recruitment

Grossmont College's Associate Dean of Student Success and Equity headed the participant outreach and recruitment process and provided the following description. Announcements regarding the focus groups were made through five classroom presentations (two ESL classes, one football defensive players class, one biology class, and a cross-cultural studies class); at the Club Fair held on the campus' main quad September 20-21 (two student ambassadors walked round campus recruiting students on both days); and additional tabling was conducted the week prior to the focus groups (October 9-12) near the college's cafeteria and in the quad. At each of these events, students who expressed interest in participating in the focus group were asked to complete interest cards (see Appendix D), which were then used to identify students for each of the focus groups.

The Associate Dean of Student Success and Equity sent notifications to all the directors/coordinators on the Student Services Council (Access Resource Center (ARC), student clubs, Associated Student of Grossmont College (ASGC), Health Center, Counseling, Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), CalWorks, Career Center, Transfer Center, Child Development Center) requesting their support recruiting students for the focus groups.

Finally, students who participated in Donuts with the Deans were emailed information about the focus groups.

Students were informed through their point of contact, and through outreach materials, that participation in the project was strictly voluntary and that they would be provided a \$10 gift card to campus dining services for their participation in the project. Outreach letters were translated into Arabic and Spanish (see Appendices A, B, C)

The day before their scheduled focus group, students were emailed, called, and sent a text message to remind them to attend.

Section 3: Participant Characteristics

Focus group participants comprised 36 students: 10 African-American, nine Middle Eastern, five Pacific Islander, 11 Latino/Hispanic, and one White.² Of these students, two were also former foster youth. With respect to gender, 14 students were female and 22 were male. Age-wise, most were within the traditional 18-25 age range, with eight older students who were returning to school after an extended absence from education.³ A little less than half of these students reported working at least part-time; six were working at Grossmont.⁴ These students had been attending Grossmont between one and seven semesters (some students had started in non-credit ESL). Furthermore, students shared a broad range of career interests and were pursuing majors such as communication, digital arts/graphic design, culinary arts, psychology/social work, multimedia design, business, nursing, administration of justice, criminal justice/forensic technology, sociology, occupational therapy, and kinesiology.

Section 4: Key Findings: Common Themes across Focus Groups

Focus Group Themes

While students spoke about their own unique experiences, the analysis of the feedback from all focus groups revealed common perspectives across the following seven key themes:

² Student racial/ethnic backgrounds were self-reported during the focus groups.

³ The age of focus group participants is an approximation based on participatory observation and comments shared by students.

⁴ Students' employment status is an approximation based on comments shared by students during the focus groups.

1. Sources of motivation to attend college
2. Experiences of historically-underserved students at Grossmont
3. Sense of overall connection to the college
4. Concerns about finances
5. Perspectives on student services and support
6. Experiences with academics

Each theme is explored in detail in the following sections. Where appropriate, student quotes are included to provide specific insights into students' perspectives and experiences.

Theme 1: Sources of Motivation to Attend College

Most of the students responded to the topic of motivation, discussing what drove them, both internally and externally, to attend and persist in college despite the challenges that many encountered at Grossmont and in their personal lives. Students described personal characteristics, such as persistence, self-motivation, and personal responsibility as keys to driving their educational pursuits. Moreover, many identified the importance of the support from the people in their lives, including Grossmont personnel, peers, and family/friends. Finally, students shared how low societal expectations for certain demographics can also be a source of motivation to get a college education.

Personal Motivation

When asked what compelled students to come to Grossmont and what keeps them in college, they cited intrinsic motivators, such as the desire to do something meaningful or improve upon something they are already good at, feeling competent, and being in control of one's efforts. Two students shared:

I want to finish what I started. I am enjoying learning [and] my major; digital art. I'm also getting to learn how to be out in the real world. I'm getting more experiences than I would if I just graduated from high school and didn't do anything. I feel like I'm getting more help and I feel motivated to continue to pursue a career ... I'm not sure if I want to transfer or not. I'm still deciding. But I want to at least finish with something. All or nothing.

I want something more, and I know that the only way I'm gonna do it is through a better education. I'm not a teeny tiny bopper anymore. I know from working for many years, that if I want to move up from minimum wage and not be in a monotonous job and actually have a career I look forward to going to everyday, where I can build a savings account and not be worried about living paycheck to payday loan just to make it, I'm gonna have to do something different. And, it's gonna start with going to school.

Another student described her motivation as stemming from growing up in a low-income family and wanting to have a better life for herself:

Personally it's just me. I just want to have a good career. I came from [a] low financial background; my parents weren't wealthy. Not that I had a bad life at all, no. But I couldn't get everything I wanted. It was hard. That's why I want to have a career.

Family

For many students, family provides a personal source of motivation to attend college. For example, one student described how she felt encouraged by her family and was inspired by the sacrifices her family made, so she could have a better life. In her words:

The people that keep me motivated are my mom and my youngest brother because they struggle a lot. My mom has given up her whole life [for her children]. And my dad has sacrificed a lot too. Now that I'm older, I just really want to give back to my mom and my dad because they've done so much for me. And my younger brother too because, he has some learning disabilities and I want to be there for him when I'm older so I can provide for him, just in case [my mom] can't.

Other students felt they were not just in college to achieve personal goals. They are there for their family—parents who did not have the opportunity to attend college, siblings, and the children they have now or will have in the future. Two students described their desire to be role models in their families:

I'm older. When I got my GED I want[ed] to show my daughter that I can do this. I can go to school and get an associate's. I want an associate's. I want to start my own business and you can't just start your own business without taking classes. I want to prove to her that you're never too old. I explained to [my daughter] that if I would have had somebody that was saying, "Hey look, this is what you need to do; once you get out of high school, go into the culinary business, because that's what you want to do."... Then I could have been a lot further along now ... I hope and pray I can continue to go here and get my associate's and walk across that stage.

I go because I have to teach my children never give up no matter how long it takes to complete something. I started college, my first time, in 1993. [I left college because I] had five children. I decided [to come back to college because] I wanted to finish so that [my children] would learn to finish. I wanted to lead by example.

Two other students explained that a desire to contradict low societal expectations can also be a source of motivation:

Most people in my demographic don't always go to school and then people don't expect them to go to school. I want to defy those odds. People didn't expect me to graduate [high school]. I made it a point to graduate. Not just for them but to prove to myself I can.

Trying to get a job is really hard because they see your last name and [certain employers] put your application in the trash ... I want to get a really good job so that I can say I did that and I'm a person of color. I didn't get [the job] because my last name was White. I got [the job] because I earned it. I want to get a really good job for my uncle because he expects a lot of me and I want to do it for my parents. Most of all I want to do it for me.

Peers, Faculty, and Staff

Students indicated the importance of having a peer network of support on campus; being around people who share the same struggles and feeling that they are not alone helps many students stay focused on school. Many of these “peer networks” are embedded into special programs such as Puente and EOPS. Two students described their experiences being a part of one of these programs:

[The Puente first year experience is] a [learning] community where we would go to class together and I think that's what helped everybody stay and keep coming to class. We all did this together. And, if somebody wandered off, it'd be like, "Hey where you going? Come on." That really helped.

[Mid-week Meltdown] is something for us [former foster youth] to get together and relate to other students that have similar backgrounds. We have discussions and everything in there. It's very helpful. We talk about our feelings and what it was like in foster care. What it's like now. [Mid-week Meltdown] has really helped me out as a person and I'm sure it's helped everyone else.

In addition to personal motivation and encouragement from family and peers, students expressed how much they valued the support from faculty and staff at the college and considered it another reason to persist in college. One student shared:

Getting involved was what got me through. I think if I didn't get involved, I really wouldn't know what I wanted to do. And I think the fact that there's staff that support students, not from a perspective that they're a staff or they're a faculty or they're dean or they're president or vice president, but when they come from a place that is more humane I feel like I can connect with them.

Honestly what keeps me coming here is definitely my counselor, and the [Puenta] program. She's awesome, she's honestly one of the best counselors

Another student added:

There's a lot of hardships, but one thing that I have always seen is Grossmont has always been there to help no matter if it [is a] staff or a student. Like any problem you have and you find the right person, they will help you. They'll welcome you with open arms. And that's one thing I have always loved of Grossmont... is their open arms.

Finally, a fourth student shared feeling motivated by her teachers:

My professor, she's just so full of life and that's what keeps me motivated to keep going to that 8:00 a.m. class even though I'm super tired. She wants you to be prepared for school. [The rest] of my professors will invite everyone to office hours. [For example,] at the end of your first exam, you get your scores back [and] she says, "I have office hours on these days, make sure to go to them. I want to go see all of you if I can." All my professors are like that. They want you to succeed. They don't make you feel like you want to fail.

Theme 2: The Experience of Historically-Underserved Students at Grossmont

When focus group participants were asked if they faced any challenges succeeding **academically** at Grossmont that could directly be attributed to their ethnic/racial background (i.e., African American, Latino, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander) or belonging to a "special population," the discussion shifted to participants' perceptions of the college's campus climate and culture. Across nearly all focus groups and a significant proportion of participants, comments were positive in describing the culture at Grossmont. Two students shared:

I personally don't see anyone viewing me any differently. I feel supported here and understood for the demographic I fall into (former foster youth). I think I'm treated equal. I haven't been judged differently because I'm in foster care.

It's a pretty diverse campus, I don't think anyone feels any different [because of] their race so, for me personally, it's just been normal. And everyone is friends with everyone.

A recent high school graduate compared her experience between high school and college.

I say it's way better than high school because you feel like the people are really adults, they respect you more, way more than the high school [... There's no bullying. They wouldn't comment on anything like how you're dressed [in a burka].

While the students in the focus groups did not appear to face academic challenges resulting from being members of a specific ethnic/racial group or "special population," further exploration of these students' experiences as members of historically underrepresented groups, revealed other types of challenges associated with being a "students of color." The most salient topic that

emerged was issues of identity.

Identity

While some students in the focus groups seem to embrace the college's diverse population, several comments were made by students across focus groups regarding the visibility or non-visibility of different ethnic/racial groups on campus; experiencing "culture shock" coming to Grossmont, which is located in a very "White" and politically conservative area of San Diego County, from communities predominantly made up of "people of color;" and feeling discriminated against for their background and/or political views. Three students described:

The majority of African Americans on campus stay close together because they know what they had to do just to get there? African Americans students just [want to] keep everyone accountable and help each other out. We had to work hard to get here ... Those are the [students] that form a brotherhood. [Other students are] still cool and everything, but I do tend to see that more African Americans they just group together on campus.

My last name is Cook and [when] people see me and they're like, "You're not White. Your last name is throwing me off, what are you?" Like who does that? So many people here are like, "Where are you from?" [I say,] "San Diego. [Then they say,] "Where are you really from?" [Again, I say,] "San Diego." And they're like, "Where are your parents from?" [Then I say,] The Philippines.

As an Asian person of color, there were so many White people on campus. I was so surprised. And that really hit me because I'm so used to being in a community full of Mexican, Filipino, and Black people. We're in Santee, so I expect there to be a bigger population of White people, but coming here, just seeing it, just feeling it was so hard. I'm a person of color; I'm the only one in this room who is Asian. It hurts.

While the transition from being the "ethnic/racial majority" to an ethnic/racial minority" is not easy for many students of color, one focus group participant viewed the majority/minority shift as a growth and learning opportunity. In her words:

I'm from San Ysidro High School, so I think 98% of our school was Hispanic. I think it's good to experience that culture shock, because you're not going to be surrounded by that community your whole life. Unless you decide to stay ... I think being exposed to different types of cultures and the way people are thinking is very important to your success in college. Because you're going to run into those people, or even sometimes professors that stand against who you are as a person. And you're just going to have to deal with it.

Filipino American students specifically expressed feelings of isolation and the sense that their experiences are not understood at the college. They expressed feeling "invisible" because they did not see themselves represented in student life and/or through special programs such as Puente and Umoja.

One non-Filipino student described not seeing Filipino culture represented on campus:

Yes, definitely as a non-Filipino, I agree with you guys because I've never really heard anything about the Filipino culture [on campus]. That really just brings to light how the [college] should support Filipino students and include them in celebrations of students from different races. I think the Latino community is very well represented here on campus, also due to Puente and the Dreamers.

Similarly to Filipino students not feeling understood, former foster youth and immigrant students expressed that the college is not fully aware of the issues they face. In the words of one student:

I would really love to see individuals who are not affiliated with the Dream Center understand what undocumented students really need in terms of them getting help financially and getting help with counseling for mental health issues. That's something I don't see.

A foster youth student cited:

There's so much that each of us as current foster youth experience, whether it's homelessness, poverty, anything. Having our instructors or deans see what we witness, what we deal with, will open their eyes to the opportunities and resources that we need. Of course everyone needs money. Everyone needs food. Everyone needs supplies for school. But there's stuff outside of school that we need support for...

Moreover, students in a number of focus groups expressed feeling discriminated against by their peers and expressed concerns about feeling unsafe to express their views. In the words of one student:

I had a chemistry class last spring. I think [there were] three or four people of color in that class. And there was this group of who were basically Trump supporters. I felt extremely uncomfortable around them only because they would talk about how they hated this and talked negatively about immigrants. So it was just kind of nerve wracking to the point where sometimes I wouldn't even want to come to class because I was so anxious. It would come to that point where I would feel kind of uncomfortable interacting with them, because I didn't know how they would talk to me, or respond to me. I wish I could have said to them; "Shut your own values down and be more considerate of the other people in the room." I [didn't because I] was too afraid. They were all pretty big guys and I'm kind of small. I was just afraid that after class I would get harassed or something.

Theme 3: Family Obligations

Students from particular ethnic minority backgrounds and first-generation student participants expressed how family obligations can impact their educational experience. Latino, Middle Eastern, and Filipino focus group participants discussed the importance of their immediate and extended family ties. In some cases, family pressure has an impact on their academic success, as family members will more often than not put family first and school second.

Three students shared:

I have to take care for every single one of my [family members]. And, if I don't, I would be like the biggest disappointment in their life. Plus, I go to school Monday through Friday, six to seven hours a day. That's just school and class. And then I have to be studying a lot.

I have to take care of my family because I'm the only one that speaks English, fluent English in the family. My mom is disabled so she can't drive. I have to take her everywhere, she has to go, doctor...

I take care of nine people. My mom and my sister who are disabled. I have to take care of everything for these two. Plus, feeding seven people, doing the laundry, shopping, doctors' appointments, and whatever.

Theme 4: Overall Connection to the College

Research on student success, including studies conducted by the RP Group, has shown that feeling valued, connected, and engaged with their college is a critical factor that contributes to overall student success.⁵ One student described the benefits of being involved on a college campus:

When I first came to Grossmont College, I didn't feel like I was a part of the community here. Only because I wasn't associated with any clubs or programs on campus. Being introduced to [the] Science Club, Networking Leadership Club, Peer Mentoring Program, and other little communities of people helped me find where my niche is in the college. After I found out [about] these clubs and organizations being available on campus, I feel really connected to this campus, which I think is crucial for student success.

Students also spoke about feeling valued at the college. One student said:

I feel like my experience here at Grossmont has in a sense brought out a better side of myself. I'm a lot more confident in my abilities to succeed through EOPS, through the classes I've taken, through the resources I've been given. I mean, I'm here, I've been here a lot longer than I wanted to but, I feel like that [has] just been a process I've personally gone through with this college.

⁵ For more information, please see the Student Support (Re)defined project website at <http://rpgroup.org/Our-Projects/Student-Support-Re-defined>.

A different student mentioned:

[Faculty and staff] value [students] a lot. Whenever [faculty and staff] see something that's negative like the [impact] of politics on minorities or [other] ethnic groups, faculty, staff, and the people who work here step up to the plate. They develop and establish resources [like the Dream Center] for those who have been affected by hardships or politics... Overall, they do whatever they can to help those who are in need like those who are [undocumented or are] DACA recipients.

While programs, clubs, and events are a way to promote student life on campus and increase students' connection to the college, some focus group participants shared that students in general, do not participate because they are either too busy or not aware of the various activities organized by student clubs. Two students cited:

Most of the time people come here take their classes and go home. And they don't really stay enough to see what's available on campus and that kind of like takes away from their experience.

It would be cool to be a part of a club. But I don't really know of any clubs on campus.

Another student who had actually attended several events on campus commented:

I've gone to on campus events. They have some really incredible events on this campus and bring in some really amazing speakers that just have passion and get you like passionate about [the subject they are presenting on].

Theme 5: Financial Concerns

There is a growing body of research showing that students' ability to pay for non-tuition costs such as food, housing, and transportation to the high costs of textbooks or handling unexpected financial obligations, such as car repairs or medical bills can make or break their ability to complete their educational goals.⁶ In concurrence with the literature, students at Grossmont cited economic issues as hurdles to their academic success. Specifically, students reported experiencing financial hardships related to: not being able to buy needed supplies for their courses, their ability to afford internet at home, making ends meet, and child care. Some students also indicated working while going to school and having family all of which impact the amount of time they have to dedicate to their education.

One student shared not being able to afford to have internet at home and not always finding it feasible to stay on campus to access the internet to complete her assignments:

Thanks God I have Section 8, [and qualify for the Energy Savings Assistance Program offered by] SDG&E (San Diego Gas & Electric). Every month, I have to come up with \$500 to pay my rent so I don't have cable or Internet, anymore. If I could just have the Internet, I'd be fine.

⁶ On the Verge the Costs and Trade-offs Facing Community College Students, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS), April 2016

A single mom who made the choice to stop working to focus on school full-time described:

Just trying to juggle, no income (this student relies on public assistance to get by) and paying for gas to take my daughter to school, and gas to get me school, make bills, and figure out when and where do I have time and extra help watching my daughter so I can get homework done and [study for] examinations. [Childcare has] gotta be free outside of my daughter's schooling time, because I can't afford it.

A student enrolled in the Culinary Arts program cited that she was being penalized because she was unable to buy the necessary equipment required of the program:

I've been in class [since] August 21st, like two months. I wasn't able to get my supplies; I need my chef clothes. I need my knives. I need all of [those things] and I wasn't able to get [them] because I [hadn't] gotten my financial aid. I was getting marked down.

One student who had access to financial aid expressed concern for his/her fellow students who do not:

[College] is very expensive. We get financial aid so it is okay. But, what about other students? They're paying for their classes and then books. They also have to pay for parking, which is so expensive.

Many students across the focus groups shared not having a choice but to work at least one part-time job to help pay for college, and support their family, which for some students leads to difficulties in finding the right balance among their family, school, and work obligations. One student described:

Balancing [work, school, and family] it's hard. I'm so weak in some subjects and because I'm not as equipped as the younger students, I have [extended family], I have a job, and now I have a husband. There's things that I'm having a hard time with that balance. Because I'm struggling so much with certain classes because I'm not equipped. I feel like everything in my life suffers and it starts to spiral a little bit.

Theme 6: Perspectives on Student Services and Support

Grossmont College, along with other community colleges in California, offers all students a range of general support services, such as counseling, as well as resources, such as financial aid, to help them meet educational goals. In addition, the college has a number of programs designed to provide additional support and resources to specific student populations. Some of these programs include the Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), Puente, Umoja, CalWORKs, and the Access Resource Center (ARC). However, the mere existence of these services does not guarantee that students will, in actuality, benefit from them. First, students need to know about what is available to them. Second, those services need to be both accessible and capable of providing the assistance that students need.

Students across the focus groups shared mixed experiences related to finding out about the resources available on campus, and interacting with general counselors and financial aid staff.

Participants also shared their appreciation for the special programs available on campus that provide additional resources and supports.

Overall Awareness of Campus Resources

Students across the focus groups expressed appreciation for the resources and services available to them at Grossmont. The primary resources referenced by students including the Tech Mall, English Writing Center, Math Study Center, tutoring, mental and general health services, Gizmo's Kitchen (food pantry), Peer Mentor Program, and comprehensive support programs, such as EOPS, Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Education Support (CAFYES) Program, Umoja, Puente, Dream Center, Accessibility Resource Center (ARC), Guardian Scholars, and CalWORKs. When asked whether they were aware of the resources available at Grossmont, focus group participants had varying opinions. Some students indicated feeling the college was already doing enough to promote available programs and services via flyers, posters, TV monitors and information fairs on campus. For example, one student who felt Grossmont sufficiently facilitated students' awareness of resource availability noted:

[The college] has people standing outside sometimes, and they're like, "Hey how are you doing? Have you ever heard about this? This is what we offer." ... [Other times], you walk by and there's booths [with information about different programs]. [The college] seems to do a lot, which is awesome.

On the contrary, other participants also indicated that the college could do more to communicate the availability of resources to students. These students described learning about a particular service by chance, such as from a friend or simply happening to stumble upon it. Additionally, a number of students reported not knowing that some services existed until their second or third semester at the college -- "I didn't know about the health center or career center until my third year." Furthermore, participants indicated that they could have been helped to an even greater extent had they known about these services earlier. Three students illustrated:

Well, when I first came to Grossmont, I found that finding resources available on campus were kind of difficult for me to find out about because the website sometimes is not updated. So I kind of wish there was more exposure towards the different resources available on campus like Puente or Umoja. That would've made my first semester a little bit better.

Everything is so fast at the very beginning, it was kind of very overwhelming and I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what classes to take; I didn't know which ones were good or bad. And then just by other students, I started hearing about Rate My Professor and all that good stuff and that helped.

I really wish that I had had a peer mentor like [the college is] doing now. [A peer mentor] could have helped me find resources. At first, I didn't know about the tutoring upstairs. It wasn't until like my second or third year when I found out [the college] had that. Just knowing those services for students would have helped me a lot rather than just getting my ed plan for something I didn't even know I wanted to do.

A fourth student added:

I just know it's mainly available online. You have to be active about it, you have to look for these things but...they do flyers, that's how I find out about most of the things. If I don't see a flyer, then I don't know about it. And I think that's the problem ... It's important to have the flyer, but for me it's not enough.

Students also commented that the flyers were too small to read if you are “rushing” by on your way to class and that the lack of consistency in taking down flyers after the event/activity has passed makes it difficult to figure out which events are current. Lastly, second language learners (ESL) said that, even if they did notice the flyer, it was not always easy to read and understand if the level of English was too high. One student illustrated:

As a second language [learner] and for Middle Eastern people... let's say, for example, this flyer, they don't understand because [for a] beginner speaker... it's hard to understand what it is.

One student mentioned that the college could also better promote outside community resources, especially for students who do not qualify for special programs and therefore cannot access the resources these programs provide. In this student's words:

I feel Grossmont does a really good job supporting their students, but they could do a whole lot more for their students like going out to community and reaching the

communities their students live in. Actually helping to bridge that gap where if you can't get a bus pass on campus, there's an organization that can help you get it.

Counseling

Focus group participants offered a range of feedback regarding their experiences with general counselors at Grossmont. For example, some students described the powerful benefits of connecting with a counselor who cares, while others citing the frustration of getting conflicting information about the classes they should be taking or receiving little guidance from counselors. Two students shared positive experiences with general counseling:

I had a whole week of [filling out] college apps and financial aid for other colleges. Then on top of that school, and midterms coming up. I had a stressful week. Just being able to reach out to my counselor [and ask], "Hey, can you squeeze me in for five minutes?"

And going over there to talk to him [where he asks],... "What are your doubts? Why are you overwhelmed?" Just letting it all out. [My counselor] just shut the door [and said],

"We're gonna sit here and talk." That's when I had huge hope. Like the whole week I was stressed, and I [talked to him for] 30 minutes, not just 5. It just helped me relax and know that I can push through it.

I go to the [counselor] that was recommended to me, and he [gave] me a great plan. He goes out of his way to call the nursing program at [San Diego] State and call people on campus over the phone. He really asks me specific questions ... He's so awesome. But then you're left with those hit or miss counselors.

One student described receiving little guidance or that some of the academic advice she received was unhelpful or even inaccurate:

I've had like four [counselors] throughout my semesters here and each of them has given me different plans. Like my first plan, my gosh, that one was so bad, like [the counselor] gave me three English classes. Who does that?

Another student shared difficulties in accessing a counselor and feeling rushed when she did get to meet with a counselor:

So horrible. I tried to make an appointment with the counselor, [and the staff] said; "There's no appointments now." I was like, "Okay, I'll come in at walk in time." I went there and the counselor is just like in a hurry. He wants one question only and then that's it; he answers it and I leave.

Financial Aid

The majority of focus group participants mentioned receiving financial aid. While a valuable resource, many students experienced challenges accessing the financial assistance they needed. Some students felt that the Financial Aid Office staff was simply not helpful, while others cited delays in receiving financial assistance as a problem. Two students described various

What I encountered was that I got a lot of help, thank goodness, from a [financial aid office] supervisor. It wasn't because I know him or because I work with him; I do not. I said, "I'm not getting the answers that I need from your workers. Can you help me?" And he sat with me and made it his project to help figure out what I needed. What I discovered at the financial aid counter itself was that each person had a different answer for the same question. And it was very difficult because I would go back every other day to ask the same question. The financial aid department itself drove me crazy this semester.

I went [to the financial aid office] and I told [a staff person], "Just give me half of [my] Pell grant." [The staff person] said, "No, because you were late to give the consortium agreement." I told her that [I turned the agreement in] months ago. [The staff person] then said, "Don't worry. We'll give you your money, \$740, in two days." I said, "Okay." Nothing happened. I called [financial aid] again, they said, "Don't worry. [Your money will] come next week." Nothing happened. I miss[ed] my bills, I overdraft[ed] my credit cards, everything [got] messed up. I came [back to financial aid to see] why they [weren't paying me, [asking them], – "Just tell me the exact date." [The financial aid staff] said, "We'll give it to you on [the] 20th of October. So, I have to wait again.

A thirds student shared:

I made an appointment with my financial aid advisor. I just don't think he was very, I'll just say, caring. Everybody else here [at the college] cares about what's going on. My financial aid advisor was like, "Well, you know, this is what you get when you file late... See this thick pack of paper, this is all the students that filed late, so it's probably going to be six to eight weeks [before you get your financial aid]." I'm like, that's not helping me. I'm thinking to myself, "Why do you have to be so jerky about it?" I understand that you have a lot of stuff going on, and you have a lot of students. But you're here to help them, that's your job. Your job isn't to be rude. I walked out of there [and] my heart was just like this man does not care and he is going to probably do whatever he can to slow [down] the process even more.

VETERANS AND FINANCIAL AID

Although there was no explicit focus group dedicated to learning about the experience of veteran students, a number of students in the focus groups identified themselves as veterans and others shared growing up in military families. Under the GI Bill, veterans can transfer their educational benefits to dependent children through the Dependent Educational Assistance program. Students from military families in particular, described the lack the knowledge about how education plans are connected to veterans' receipt of their financial benefits among general counselors. In the words of one student:

For me, I received my financial aid from the military. So I wish there would be more exposure [for financial aid staff about] military financial aid and how to apply for it. It took me almost six months to have all my paperwork done because every time I would go to the office, [a financial aid staff] would be like oh you need this. I just didn't know what to give them.

Specialized Support Programs

As mentioned previously, many of the students in the focus groups are part of various support programs, such as EOPS, Guardian Scholars, CARE, CalWORKs, Umoja, and Puente, which offer a high level of support, such as dedicated counselors. These “special or categorical programs” require students to meet certain criteria for eligibility, such as financial need, enrollment in 12 or more units, being a current or former foster youth, first-generation college goer, or having a diagnosed disability.

Supports are designed to meet the particular needs of these student populations and often provide more intensive, individualized assistance. For example, many special programs have dedicated counselors, who are well-versed in the resources available to students and the processes for accessing these resources. In addition, both the structure of these special programs and the nature of serving a smaller student population typically facilitates the development of deeper and more consistent relationships between students and faculty/staff.

The students participating in these special programs appeared to feel highly supported. Unfortunately, these programs have limited capacity and are not able to serve all the students who are both eligible and eager to participate.

Two students shared:

When I came to Grossmont I had horrible circumstances. I found I was often confused about what I was supposed to be doing. Whether it was classes, what major I wanted to be in, and I didn't know the services I [qualified for]. Fortunately, I was able to find a counselor with EOPS; he's been my counselor since I first got here. He was like this guiding force [telling me], “You can qualify for this and you can probably get this scholarship.” ... He opened a lot of doors for me on campus.

If I give [program counselors] a clear direction of what I want my end result to be, I'm confident in the counselors I'm working with right now with EOPS. I mean if you build a

rapport with the counselors and you check in ... which I love ... CARE and EOPS have you check in at minimum three times a semester. They help you plan and map out exactly what [classes you need to take]. These are your long term goals [and] this is where you are. [Program counselors] map out [how to get to your goal] in a way that's cool.

A third student added:

[Program counselors] make me remember why I love being in the program. [The program] is so intensive. [Counselors] sit down with you and they make sure you're on the right track. It's really great how [counselors] work with you. Not only [do counselors work] one-on-one [with you], but it feels like they have no other care in the world when you're in that office.

In addition to dedicated counseling, students mentioned valuing other program resources, such as textbook vouchers and transportation cards, free printing, and a dedicated space to access computers and “hang-out.” Two students shared:

For me, it's a great college actually because there [are] many different programs students can benefit from for example, a program that I work with, CalWORKs, they give money for books and transportation, for people [who are] receiving cash aid from [the] County.

I was very lucky and very unfortunate to find out that ARC [offers] free printing. I was like, “Wait, really? Wow! That's really awesome.” ARC also has a space where they have computers to type your work and then print it out for free. This is a great help for students.

Campus Food

Finally, students spoke about the high cost of food on campus and how much they have appreciated the recent food pantry opened by the college (Gismo's Kitchen). For many low-income students being able to afford food, especially healthy food, can be a challenge. Students' described the cost of food offered by the college's cafeteria as prohibitive not to mention the lack of healthy food options. Students noted that the college recently opened a food pantry (Gizmo's Kitchen) that provides free food much like a food bank does. However, while Gizmo's Kitchen is a valuable resource, it does not address the broader issue of access to healthy and affordable food for all Grossmont students.

Four students illustrated:

[The college] provides a food pantry. And that's actually helped me out a lot. School food is expensive and I don't have time to go somewhere like a McDonald's to the dollar menu. I have to eat at school and I noticed that the food prices in the cafeteria are kind of high.

Food -- it's pretty pricey. It's almost going to a gas station and having to buy like an apple for \$2.00. A cup of pudding is almost three bucks. I don't think that helps out a lot of students. I mean we're not all made of money, you know.

Honestly? There is no good or healthy food in cafeteria at all. A lot of fat, a lot of oil. Oh my gosh, a lot of fried things.

I started bringing food from home because whenever I'm going to eat [in the cafeteria], it's just going to make me sick. If I don't eat something that's healthy my stomach hurts. And I just don't feel good.

Theme 7: Experiences with Academics

Finally, focus group participants offered a range of feedback regarding their academic experiences at Grossmont. Students had mixed perspectives on their relationships with faculty, with some describing the powerful benefits of connecting with an instructor who cares and others sharing the frustration of encountering teachers who they felt were not as interested in supporting their success. Participants also expressed appreciation for the variety of academic support services available at Grossmont, particularly peer tutoring in mathematics. Lastly, the lack of course availability was raised as an issue.

Relationships with Faculty

Participants' experiences with their teachers were mixed across the focus groups. On the positive side, two students described:

[My professor is] actually going to be the guy [faculty] that gets me out of this school. He is engaging and truly amazing. He records every lecture, he's always willing to help.

Even if he's frustrated with you, he'll tell you, "This is frustrating. But you know that it's not personal?" I think that really, I was going to quit. I was about to give up and then you encounter one faculty member that just changes your whole outlook.

I'm a visual learner. My first teacher [provided] handouts and they would have like a step-by-step process on how to do a problem. [The teacher] would also write it on the board versus some teachers I've had where they just talk really fast, write something on the board [and] then erase it. I'm more of a visual person. I actually like when they have handouts because I have something to reference.

Two other students added:

My professor, she'll give a little like fire talk to keep you motivated. And that's what I love about her. I was thinking about switching to a different major; public health instead of nursing. Then [my professor] gave us a really cool, motivating talk and it reignited my whole love and passion for the nursing program and the medical field. My professor always e-mails [the students] like almost every week saying, "[These are my] office hours. This is how to succeed in class." I think the whole constant communication really shows that she really cares and wants us to succeed.

[My professor] always checks up on you. If you miss class he says, "Hey, what happened? Why weren't you in class? Is anything going on? Are you eating? Have you slept?" [Professors] know what's going on, and make you feel like I want to strive. [Professors] are here for you to strive and here for you to be successful. And at the end of the day, when you transfer, they wanna be there. And it's just the way that some [professors] were taught and they wanna make an impact.

In contrast, two students shared having unhelpful experiences with faculty:

I'm not too good in math. [My professor] knew how to deal with the kids who were great at math. I don't know if that's what she was trained for, but she didn't really know how to approach the students who weren't good at math. It was like me and other students who were just trash at math were on the backburner all the time, and we were barely getting by. You could go to her office and ask her, "What was this on the homework?" [She] would say, "Check your notes." [We'd say], "We checked our notes. Can we get some assistance?" [She still says], "It's in the notes."

I've [told my instructor] I need to come and see you. I can't meet you at normal office hours due to the fact that I'm a single parent. I would have [no] way of getting anything done with you in your office if I had my four and a half year old with me. [My instructor isn't willing to work with me and schedule a time outside of [his office hours] to meet.

A couple other students added that some faculty appear not to like their jobs, which detracts from the learning experience:

You have teachers who seem like they hate their life. Honestly, they're just sitting there frustrated trying to get through the lesson. [Other] teachers seem [to be] here for the money. If a student is trying to reach out to the [teacher], they're trying to push you to other resources besides themselves ... so they can just go home.

There's been teachers where [it seems like they] hate the class because they don't really connect with the students. Or they don't make an effort to.

Many students cited that seeking assistance from adjunct faculty was especially difficult because unlike full-time faculty, they lack of office hours.

One student shared:

I think it's more about contacting them. You don't have time to talk with adjunct instructors since they don't have office hours and [students] only have 10 minutes between classes and sometimes there's a class already waiting outside. You e-mail them,

and they don't respond. You ask [the instructor] [at the] next class [and] they [tell you they] responded. [When they do respond], instructors don't get back to you for weeks.

And usually it's been important. A lot of [instructors] just don't answer or they expect you to do it on your own.

Academic Support Services

Focus group participants noted that they both used and appreciated the academic support services provided by the college, including the library, Tech Mall, Math Study Center, Tutoring Center (one-on-one and group tutoring), guidance courses, and English Writing Center. While students felt that having tutoring available for different subjects was helpful, once students were with a tutor, they shared having mixed experiences with the tutoring itself. Two students shared positive experiences with their tutors:

[The college] has an English Writing Center which basically all, or most of the English teachers will recommend [to students] if we have a paper due, or any kind of short essay [to write]. [When I go, I] have the prompt as well as the typed or written response to the paper or the assignment. [The tutors], they'll review it. They'll walk us through what makes sense grammatically and all that kind of stuff. Then [the tutors] will give you some good feedback. [For example,] I'm an emotional writer so I always put myself into things, and [the tutors] are like you can't always do that with every [writing assignment] sometimes, you have to take yourself out of it. I appreciate that constant reminder.

At the Tutoring Center they're all students and they're able to [tutor] in different subjects [like] statistics [and] calculus. Most of the tutors already know me. I like how I have a variety of tutors available that can help me. I know that we have specialized tutoring for certain classes like anthropology or humanities. I appreciate those resources because sometimes [the material in my courses] gets confusing.

In contrast, two other students shared their dissatisfaction with the assistance they received from the Tutoring Center:

I've had both great experiences and terrible experiences. Before your appointment you have to ask, "What are the reviews on this tutor? What do they tutor? How many students do they get? How busy are they?" When I first went [to the Tutoring Center], I was expecting all [tutors] to be great because they're all tested to be a tutor to make sure they know the material. But, I've had appointments where the [tutor] spent the whole hour Googling one question.

One time, I went to get help in my math class that I dropped because it was too hard. The tutor didn't understand my math as well. I thought [that] to be a math tutor you had to understand every single [type of] math? [The tutor] was just sitting there struggling as much as I was struggling.

Finally, students expressed their frustration with the Tutoring Center's appointment process and availability of tutors. Focus group participants described having to make an appointment for one-on-one tutoring a week in advance. One student described:

I would say that they would need to work on is the upstairs tutoring center, which is like one-on-one tutoring. Because you have to schedule in advance, and they get booked completely and it's hard to get in.

Another student mentioned:

If you go on Monday [to make a tutoring appointment], it's for next Monday. You can't set up [an appointment when it is convenient for you] like I want an appointment for three weeks from now on a Thursday because the next Thursday I have an exam. I have to stay on top of the weeks to make sure I get an appointment the Thursday before my exam. That's kinda hard for students.

Section 5: Recommendations

Based on the perspectives articulated by students across the 10 focus groups, the seven recommendations below provide Grossmont faculty, staff, and administrators a powerful opportunity to consider actions the college can take to best support student success.

1. *Explore changes to policies and practices in general counseling that would enhance student/counselor relationships and increase the delivery of accurate information and helpful services.*

Students across the focus groups frequently described general counseling as both important to their academic success and a source of numerous obstacles. Many reported that they had difficulty getting appointments, and even when they did see a counselor, they felt they were not always given accurate or consistent information. In contrast, students participating in programs with dedicated counselors, such as EOPS, CalWORKs, Umoja, and Puente, told a starkly different story. These students described the powerful benefits of having a personal relationship with a counselor who both knew them well and was able to convey useful information that helped them stay focused and on track toward their goals.

While it is clear that budgetary concerns and a potentially unwieldy counselor-to-student ratio must be taken into account with respect to general counseling policies and practices, numerous options are still available to Grossmont that would enhance students' counseling experiences. For example, Grossmont could explore providing general counselors with additional professional development focused on keeping them up-to-date with the large amount of often-shifting information they must be able to accurately share with students. Additionally, a system that enabled students to consistently work with a dedicated counselor would facilitate the development of stronger relationships between students and counselors, and, in doing so, increase counselors' capacity to understand students' goals, help them overcome obstacles to these goals, and, ultimately, pave the path to success.

2. Create policies and practices that respond to a thorough understanding of the challenges and constraints faced by low-income students.

Although there was no specific focus group comprising low-income students, “low-income” was indeed a characteristic with which students in all of the focus groups identified. Students discussed the myriad ways financial challenges affected their attendance, which then cascaded into affecting their academic performance. Even when students received Board of Governors’ waivers and other financial aid, they still struggled to meet both large expenses, such as textbooks, and even seemingly small expenses, such as transportation and parking.

Specifically, the college may want to look at its financial aid disbursement policies and consider programs such as book advances⁷ or other types of innovations to ensure that students receive financial aid in a timely manner. Furthermore, the college could identify ways to create more jobs on campus to reduce students’ commute time and stress trying to balance work and school responsibilities. On a related matter, students suggested the college pay work-study students weekly or bi-weekly instead of monthly, which is the current practice. Finally, the college could explore less expensive and healthier food options for students.

3. Explore ways to support faculty in creating safe and inclusive learning environments where all students feel valued and heard.

A few focus group participants described having experiences in their classes where they felt unsafe and vulnerable because of their ethnic/racial background and or political views. The college should consider providing professional development on inclusive teaching strategies to support and build faculty’s capacity to address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities. These teaching strategies can contribute to an overall inclusive and safe learning environment, in which students feel equally valued.

4. Robustly engage students in the design, development, and testing of communication strategies regarding the resources available to support their success.

During the focus groups, students frequently started sentences with, “I didn’t know about…” or “If I had known, I would have started earlier with…” or “It wasn’t until I heard from a friend that…” Across various focus groups, students talked about a range of college services that are designed to support them—tutoring, health services, or special support programs for which they are eligible. However, they frequently indicated that they initially did not know about those resources, and that the discovery process was a haphazard one. Frequently, students learned about a useful service informally from a friend rather than proactively from the college.

When asked to offer suggestions to the college leaders, students requested that the college improve the ways that students are informed about the resources and services available to them. However, simply announcing the availability of a certain service or program is not sufficient. Instead, a creative and recurrent communication strategy that reaches students at all levels,

⁷ This program is offered to assist students who attend colleges within the Maricopa Community College District in Phoenix, Arizona (<https://my.maricopa.edu/financial-aid-and-services/book-advances>).

whether a bewildered newcomer or seasoned veteran, should be implemented. Most important to creating a strategy with the greatest chance of efficacy is that the students themselves are deeply engaged in the design, development, and testing of messages and media. After all, only students can truly know what messages will really resonate and what delivery methods and venues will be effective among their peers.

5. Ensure tutoring services are able to meet student need and demand.

Students identified that one-on-one tutoring offered by the Tutoring Center as particularly impactful; however, they found that accessing those services could be problematic. For example, students described having to make an appointment a week in advance to see a tutor. Students experienced an inflexible scheduling system in which they could not schedule an appointment at a time when they really needed help. To expand access, the college could explore adding more tutors and re-examining the current scheduling system to ensure students have access to tutors at a time that will benefit students the most.

6. Regularly capture student feedback that can be used to inform and modify processes, practices, and policies throughout the institution.

While the 10 focus groups described in this report provide a significant window into the educational experiences of Grossmont students and suggest numerous opportunities for improving the student experience, capturing student feedback as a one-off event can only provide the institution with limited insight into the perspectives of the most important members of its community—students. As such, the RP Group recommends that Grossmont develop and implement strategies to continuously and robustly incorporate student feedback into its administrative processes, such as planning for new initiatives, assessing the effectiveness of key services, introducing curricular/pedagogical innovations, or simply gathering input regarding the quality of the educational experience at Grossmont. Above all else, community colleges are designed to promote and facilitate student success as best as possible, and all efforts to achieve this goal can only be enhanced by a full integration of the student voice.

One approach to building on its initial effort in this arena would be for Grossmont to schedule and conduct regular focus groups throughout the year, inviting students across the general population as well as targeting those from groups that are particularly struggling to succeed. Regardless of method, it is critical that the college institute a regular and ongoing feedback loop through which students' perspectives are not only collected, but also analyzed, reflected upon, widely shared, and incorporated into institutional decision-making and operations.

7. Empower everyone who works at the college to be a source for student support.

Students across the 10 focus groups shared mixed experiences with the relationships they had with faculty and staff at the college. Grossmont College is not only an organizational entity; it is also a network of complex human interactions. For students to feel supported both academically and socially, the college must promote a culture where all faculty, staff, and administrators feel student success is everyone's responsibility.

Instructors and counselors may see their roles at the college as already inherently about support. In contrast, others may not see how what they do directly supports students, such as individuals

working behind the scenes in payroll, maintenance, or administration. However, everyone who works at the college can potentially play a valuable role supporting students.

In order to empower every person working at Grossmont to provide appropriate student support, the college must do more than simply telling staff to “be more supportive” of students and then leaving it to them to figure out on their own how exactly they should be supporting students. Personnel across the college must have the opportunity to discover exactly *how* they can, both in their position and as a member of the college community, directly contribute to student success. The college needs to provide professional development and support to help personnel develop the skills and knowledge necessary to support students, and continually practice these new skills with the full cultural and logistical backing of the college.

Conclusion

This report summarizes key findings from 10 focus groups comprising a diverse group of 36 Grossmont students. A variety of themes emerged describing Grossmont’s institutional culture as well as the programs and people students’ value and the challenges shared across student populations. By sharing their challenges and recommendations, focus group participants have provided Grossmont with tremendous insight into what must be done to create a culture that promotes equitable student success.

These focus groups marked an important beginning for making student perspectives more visible at Grossmont College. Looking at the college through the lens of students’ experiences—rather than the lens of policy, administration, finances, organizational charts, or logistics—could dramatically help to evolve the campus community’s (faculty, staff, administrators) understanding of the institution, shaping practice in powerful new ways. The college has an opportunity to build upon this initial step of eliciting student views by developing a systematic process to regularly engage student voices in the planning, design, assessment and refinement of college practices, particularly those central to student equity.

Appendix A. English Invitation Letter

Dear Student,

Get Involved! We want to hear from you!

Grossmont College is conducting a series of focus groups in which you will have an opportunity to talk about your personal experiences at Grossmont with other students. These focus groups will be facilitated by a researcher who is not a Grossmont College employee.

Everything that you share will **remain confidential**; records of who participated in the focus groups will also **remain confidential**.

We care about your success. We understand that you may be facing significant challenges as a student at Grossmont. We are interested in learning how we can help your experience at GC be the best it can be! Help us in this effort.

Please indicate which group with which you self-identify. Please select **only one group**:

Latino/Hispanic

Latino/Hispanic Male

African American

African American Male

Pacific Islander

Current and Former Foster Youth

Middle Eastern Women

Middle Eastern Men

Students who are 25+

Students who receive services from the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC)

Students who participate will receive a \$10 voucher to the cafeteria!

Appendix B. Spanish Invitation Letter

Querido estudiante,

¡Involúcrate! ¡Queremos escuchar de ti!

Grossmont College está llevando a cabo una serie de grupos de enfoque donde usted tendrá la oportunidad de hablar sobre sus experiencias en Grossmont con otros estudiantes. Estos grupos de enfoque serán facilitados por un investigador que no es un empleado de Grossmont College.

Todo lo que comparta **será confidencial**; los registros de quienes participaron en los grupos focales también permanecerán confidenciales.

Tu éxito es importante para nosotros. Entendemos que puedes estar enfrentando desafíos significativos como estudiante en Grossmont. ¡Estamos interesados en aprender cómo podemos ayudar tu experiencia en GC a ser lo mejor que puede ser! Ayúdanos en este esfuerzo.

Por favor indica con qué grupo te auto-identificas para participar en un grupo de enfoque.
Seleccione un solo grupo:

Latino/Hispano

Hombre Latino/Hispano

Afroamericano

Hombre Afroamericano

Isleño del Pacífico

Jóvenes de crianza (Foster Youth)

Mujeres de origen del Medio Este

Hombres de origen del Medio Este

Estudiantes mayores de 25 años

Los estudiantes que reciben servicios del Centro de Recursos de Accesibilidad (ARC)

Appendix C. Arabic Invitation Letter

...عزيزي الطالب

إشارك معنا، راكهم يهنا

تنظم كلية كروسمنت مجموعه من مجاميع (كروبوات) ستتمكن من خالهم امتالك الفرصة للحدث عن خبرتك وتجربتك مع زمالتك في كلية كروسمنت. هذه المجاميع او الكروبوات مداره من قبل باحث مستقل وليس احد موظفي كلية كروسمنت. ان كل ال عملومات التي

. ستستخدمها ستبقى في غاية سرية من ضمنها السماء المشاركه في هذه المجاميع

كطالب في كلية كروسمنت فاننا انهم جدا لنجاحك و ننفهم مواجتهك لمختلف التحديات. يسعدنا ان

ان تعلم كيف يمكن ان نساعدكم في تجربتكم في كلية كروسمنت بافضل المكانات المتوفرة

. ساعدنا في ذلك ال مجهود

الرجاء اختي ار المجموعه الصبح من الاختيارات ادناه للمشاركة في هذه المجاميع. يرجى

:اختي ار مجموعه واحده فقط

ابيض / التيني ذكر

هسبانك / التيني المريكان

الفارقه

من المريكان الفارقه الهاديء

الذكور خاصه جزر المحيط

الوسط شباب رعاية النساء

من الشرق من الوسط الشرق

الذكور

الطالب ممن يزيد اعمارهم عن ال 25 سنه

الطالب المستلمين خدمات مركز مصادر المساعده (اي ار سي)

Appendix D. Focus Group Student Card

Focus Group Participant Information

GROSSMONT
COLLEGE



GCCCD ID# _____

FIRST NAME: _____

LASTNAME: _____

CELL PHONE NUMBER: _____ (To receive text reminder)

EMAIL:

GROUP WITH WHICH YOU IDENTIFY (Please select one):

Latino/Hispanic - **WEDNESDAY, October 18th 4:00 PM-5:30 PM**

Male Latino/Hispanic - **THURSDAY, October 19th 1:00 PM-2:30 PM**

African American - **THURSDAY, October 19th 8:00 AM-9:30 AM**

Male African American - **THURSDAY, October 19th 10:30 AM-12:00 PM**

Male Middle Eastern - **WEDNESDAY, October 18th 11:30 AM-1:00 PM**

Female Middle Eastern - **WEDNESDAY, October 18th 9:00 AM-10:30 AM**

Pacific Islander - **FRIDAY, October 20th 9:30 AM-11:00 AM**

Students who are 25+ - **TUESDAY, October 17th 5:00 PM-6:30 PM**

Students who receive services through the Accessibility Resource Center - **TUESDAY, October 17th 3:00 PM-4:30 PM**

Current & Former Foster Youth - **WEDNESDAY, October 18th 2:00 PM-3:30 PM**

APPENDIX F – 2016-2017 Financial Aid Policy & Procedure
Manual

G R O S S M O N T
C O L L E G E



2016 – 2017

FINANCIAL AID

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword, District Policy, Mission Statement & Goals	3
Chapter I – Principles and Policies of Financial Aid Administration.....	5
Section 101 Principles of Financial Aid Administration	5
Section 102 Financial Aid Policy for Grossmont College.....	5
Section 103 Confidentiality.....	6
Section 104 Federal ED-PIN Integrity and Security.....	6
Section 105 Gift Policy	7
Section 106 Code of Conduct.....	7
Section 107 Consumer Information.. ..	9
Chapter II – Application Policies and Procedures.....	10
Section 201 Summary of Student Eligibility Requirements for.....	10
Student Aid Programs	
Section 202 Documentation	11
Section 203 Dependency Status.....	15
Section 204 Ability to Benefit.....	16
Section 205 Consortium Agreement	16
Section 206 Financial Aid Workshop	16
Chapter III – Student Budgets.....	18
Section 301 Expenses.....	18
Chapter IV – Need Analysis.....	21
Section 401 Standard Need Analysis Procedures	21
Section 402 Professional Judgment.....	21
Section 403 Projected Income	22
Section 404 Need Analysis Methodologies.....	23
Section 405 Income and Assets.....	24
Section 406 Resources	25
Chapter V – Awarding Financial Aid.....	27
Section 501 Packaging.....	27
Section 502 Retroactive Awards	27
Section 503 Priorities for Awarding	28
Section 504 Disbursements	28
Section 505 Revisions.....	30
Section 506 Return of Title IV Funds	30
Section 507 Authority to Refuse Funding.....	34
Section 508 Verification.....	35
Section 509 Fraud.....	35
Chapter VI – Student Rights and Responsibilities	37
Section 601 Unit Load	37
Section 602 Satisfactory Academic Progress	38
Section 603 Reinstatement	40
Section 604 Petitions.....	41
Chapter VII – Financial Aid Programs and Regulations	44
Section 701 Federal Student Aid	44
Section 702 State Student Aid	54
Section 703 Other Programs.....	59

FOREWORD

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

This Financial Aid Policy and Procedure Manual is intended to act as a guide for financial aid administration at Grossmont College. It often contains suggestive language (such as “may” and “should”), the combination of which is essential in achieving equity and efficiency in the allocation of financial aid resources to eligible students.

Deviation from these policies and procedures may be made upon consultation with the Director of Financial Aid, the Financial Aid Supervisor or the Financial Aid Front Office Supervisor.

DISTRICT BOARD POLICY

Per GCCCD Board Policy, Grossmont College has established financial aid programs and services that are specifically outlined throughout the remainder of this document in accordance with the following:

[BP 5130](#)

[AP 5130](#)

GCCCD Board Policy and Administrative Procedures are update as needed, due to changes in federal or state law, and reviewed every six years.

MISSION STATEMENT

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

The Financial Aid Office will effectively administer financial aid programs and provide student centered support services that will promote student access, success and equal educational opportunities to enable students to fully develop their individual potential.

GOALS

- 1) Ensure compliance with College and District policies and procedures and federal and state regulations.
- 2) Focus on continued improvement of customer service.
- 3) Regularly re-evaluate and streamline the financial aid application process for easier access and delivery of services to students.
- 4) Provide educational outreach to current and prospective students, families, staff, faculty and local community regarding financial aid information (i.e. Academic Planning and Financial Aid course, Parent/Student College Night, Financial Aid workshops, etc.).
- 5) Coordinate with other departments within Grossmont College, Cuyamaca College, and the District as well as other higher educational institutions, and federal and state agencies.
- 6) Implement the latest technological advances, as mandated by federal and state agencies.
- 7) Increase the number of applicants for scholarships and the number of scholarships available.

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES OF FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATION

101. PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATION

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

The statement of principles quoted below was developed and endorsed by the institutional membership of the College Scholarship Service Assembly of the College Entrance Examination Board.

- A. The purpose of any financial aid program – institutional, governmental, or private – should be to provide monetary assistance to students who can benefit from further education but cannot do so without such assistance.
- B. Each college has an obligation to assist in realizing the national goal of equality of educational opportunity. The college, therefore, should work with schools, community groups, and other educational institutions in support of this goal.
- C. The college should publish budgets that state total student expenses realistically including, where applicable, maintenance at home, commuting expenses, personal expenses, and necessary travel.
- D. Parents are expected to contribute according to their means, taking into account their income, assets, number of dependents, and other relevant information. Students themselves are expected to contribute from their own assets and earnings, including appropriate borrowing against future earnings.
- E. Financial aid should be offered only after a determination that the resources of the family are insufficient to meet the student's educational expenses. The amount of aid offered should not exceed the amount needed to meet the difference between the student's total educational expenses and the family's resources.
- F. The amount and type of contribution expected from students should be related to the circumstances of the individual. In the assignment of funds to those students designated to receive financial aid, the largest amounts of total grant assistance should go to students with the least ability to pay.
- G. The college should review its financial assistance policies annually and adjust them, if necessary, to reflect changes in the financial needs of students and the expenses of attending the institution. The college has an obligation to inform students and parents of the financial aid renewal policies for enrolled students at the time of the initial offer of financial assistance.
- H. Because the amount of financial assistance awarded reflects the economic circumstances of students and their families, the college should refrain from any public announcement of the amount of aid offered, and encourage the students, their secondary schools, and others to respect the confidentiality of this information.
- I. All documents, correspondence, and conversations between and among the aid applicants, their families, and financial aid advisors are confidential and entitled to the protection ordinarily arising from a counseling relationship.
- J. Concern for the student should be paramount. Financial aid should be administered in such a manner that other interests, important though they may be, are subordinate to the needs of students.

102. FINANCIAL AID POLICY FOR GROSSMONT COLLEGE

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

All financial aid is awarded on a first-completed, first-served basis with priority given to those students with the greatest need who currently meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards outlined in Chapter 6 of this manual. Aid is administered in accordance with the applicable laws of the United States and the State of California, regulations of the College stated in the College catalogue and the policies and procedures outlined in this manual. Additional information on the College philosophy and objectives, general regulations, academic

offerings, accreditation, and refund policies are available in the Grossmont College Catalogue, Grossmont College Class Schedule and the Grossmont College Student Guide to Financial Aid.

It is the policy of the College not to discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender, handicap (including disability), medical condition, status as a veteran, age, marital status, sexual orientation, economic status, or national origin in employment practices or any action, decision, or practice related to students as prohibited by law.

103. CONFIDENTIALITY

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Grossmont College is committed to protecting and maintaining the confidentiality of student personal information and records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA requires that student personal information, such as social security numbers, birthdates and financial and academic records may not be disclosed to anyone other than the student without the student's expressed written permission.

Confidentiality must be protected whether working with a student in person or via the phone or the internet. To assist the college in protecting the student's right to confidentiality we will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Requests Made In Person

- A. Students will be asked for photo identification when requesting information from student records. Appropriate photo identification includes Grossmont College Student I.D., State Driver's License or I.D. card, Military I.D., High School I.D. card, passport or government issued I.D. card.

2. Requests Made Via the Phone or the Internet

- A. Only GENERAL information should be given out over the phone or via e-mail. However, if a student needs specific information via the phone they may be identified by asking for the following:
- 1) Their Social Security Number
 - 2) Their Date Of Birth
 - 3) Their Colleague ID
 - 4) Their complete address and phone number

If the student cannot minimally answer 1, 2, 3, and 4 correctly then we shall not assist them with anything other than general information over the phone.

- B. Even when identified using the criteria in Section 103.2.A above, specific award and disbursement information should not be divulged over the phone; instead, students should be encouraged to go view their information via our secured on-line webpage.

104. FEDERAL FSA USER ID INTEGRITY AND SECURITY

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

It is the goal of the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office to ensure the integrity and the security of the federal FSA User ID process so that student electronic signatures remain a viable and reliable method of conducting on-line transactions with respect to the Federal Financial Aid application process.

No Grossmont College Financial Aid Staff member shall ask for a student's federal FSA User ID or password nor should they accept it from the student to conduct federal on-line financial aid transactions on the student's behalf, even if they have the student's consent. In addition, staff should advise students of the need to keep their FSA User ID and password confidential and secure and that they exist solely to allow the student or the parent to conduct federal student aid on-line transactions.

Grossmont College Financial Aid Staff are here to assist students with the application process and, in the course of supporting the student, will provide the student access to a computer (either by appointment or by the use of lobby/lab computers) and allow the student to enter their FSA User ID and access federal application information for themselves.

105. GIFT POLICY

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

It is the policy of the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office that no gifts of significant monetary value will be accepted by any staff member from any student, potential student, or lending institution for which the Financial Aid Office might have the responsibility of determining student financial need for any federal, state, campus or scholarship program.

Specifically:

1. No cash, gift cards/gift certificates (of any value), checks, or monetary warrants of any kind (including foreign currency).
2. No accepting favors, dinners out or exchanges of materials or services.

Acceptable items include: food, flowers, plants or handcrafted items – i.e. items which may be shared/enjoyed by the entire department.

106. CODE OF CONDUCT

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

The 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) conditions the eligibility of educational institutions to participate in Title IV programs on the development, advertisement, administration and enforcement of a Code of Conduct prohibiting conflicts of interest for the institutions officers, employees and agents [HEOA § 487(a)(25)].

To comply with this requirement, Grossmont College has developed the following Code of Conduct (which was adapted from the GEN-08-12 Dear Colleague Letter and from NASFAA's Statement of Ethical Principals and Code of Conduct for Institutional Financial Aid Professionals):

1. An officer or employee of the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office shall take no action which may result in their personal benefit and shall refrain from taking any action which they believe is contrary to law, regulation, or the best interests of the students and parents they serve.
2. An officer or employee of the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office shall make every effort to ensure that the information and advice they provide is accurate, unbiased, and does not reflect any preference arising from actual or potential personal gain.
3. Neither Grossmont College as an institution, nor any individual officer, employee or agent shall enter into any revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender. The HEOA defines a "revenue-sharing arrangement" as any arrangement between an institution and a lender under which the lender makes Title IV loans to students attending the institution (or to the families of those students), the institution recommends the lender or the loan products of the lender and, in exchange, the lender pays a fee or provides other material benefits, including revenue or profit-sharing, to the institution or to its officers, employees, or agents.
4. No officer or employee of Grossmont College who is employed in the financial aid office or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or agent who has responsibilities with respect to education loans, shall solicit or accept any gift from a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans. For purposes of this prohibition, the term "gift" means any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, or other item having a monetary value of more than a de minimus amount. A gift does not include (1) a brochure, workshop, or training using standard materials relating to a loan, default aversion, or financial literacy; (2) food, training, or informational material provided as part of a training session designed to improve the service of a lender, guarantor, or servicer if the training contributes to the professional development of the institution's officer, employee or agent; (3) favorable terms and benefits on an education loan provided to a student employed by the institution if those terms and benefits are comparable to those provided to all students at the institution; (4) entrance and exit counseling as long as the institution's staff are in control of the counseling and the counseling does not promote the services of a specific lender; (5) philanthropic contributions from a lender, guarantor, or servicer that are unrelated to education loans or any contribution that is not made in exchange for advantage related to education loans, and; (6) State education grants, scholarships, or financial aid funds administered by or on behalf of a State.
5. An officer or employee of Grossmont College who is employed in the financial aid office or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or an agent who has responsibilities with

- respect to education loans, shall not accept from any lender or affiliate of any lender any fee, payment, or other financial benefit (including the opportunity to purchase stock) as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or other contract to provide services to a lender or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.
6. Grossmont College shall not request or accept from any lender, any assistance with call center staffing or financial aid office staffing, except that a lender may provide professional development training, educational counseling materials (as long as the materials identify the lender that assisted in preparing the materials), or staffing services on a short-term, nonrecurring basis during emergencies or disasters.
 7. Any employee who is employed in the financial aid office, or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans or other student financial aid, and who serves on an advisory board, commission, or group established by a lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, shall be prohibited from receiving anything of value from the lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, except that the employee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in serving on such advisory board, commission, or group.
 8. Grossmont College shall not:
 - a. for any first-time borrower, assign, through award packaging or other methods, the borrower's loan to a particular lender; or
 - b. refuse to certify, or delay certification of, any loan based solely on the borrower's selection of a particular lender or guaranty agency.
 9. Grossmont College shall not request or accept from any lender any offer of funds to be used for private education loans, including funds for an opportunity pool loan (an "opportunity pool loan" is defined as a private educational loan made by a lender to a student, or the student's family, that involves a payment by the institution to the lender for extending credit to the student), to students in exchange for the institution providing concessions or promises regarding providing the lender with:
 - a. a specified number of loans made, insured, or guaranteed under Title IV;
 - b. a specified loan volume of such loans; or
 - c. a preferred lender arrangement for such loans.

107. STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Per federal regulations, Grossmont College provides basic consumer information to students and the community through the following publications (via either printed materials and/or published web pages):

- Grossmont College Consumer Information webpage: <http://www.grossmont.edu/college-info/consumer-information/default.aspx>
- Grossmont College Catalogue
- Grossmont College Class Schedule
- Grossmont College Student Guide to Financial Aid
- Grossmont College Financial Aid Award Letters and Instructions

CHAPTER II

APPLICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

201. SUMMARY OF STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT AID PROGRAMS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

201.1 To apply for federal aid, a student must:

- A. Be a citizen or national of the United States; be a permanent resident of the United States; or be an eligible non-citizen. Refer to the [Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook](#) (Volume 1, Chapter 2) for a listing of the various categories and all acceptable documentation.
- B. Be accepted for enrollment or be enrolled in a specified number of units as required for a particular academic program.
- C. Not be a member of a religious community, society or order who by its direction is pursuing a course of study and who receives support and maintenance from that community, society, or order. These individuals shall be deemed not to have financial need.
- D. The student must be enrolled in a course of study which leads to an approved certificate or a degree or transfer pathway to a four-year institution.
- E. All students must certify whether they owe a repayment on any Title IV grant or are in default on any Title IV loan received for attendance at any institution.
- F. All students enrolling for the first time after July 1, 2012 must have a High School Diploma, GED or state recognized equivalent to be eligible for federal financial aid. New students will no longer have the option to pass an Ability to Benefit (ATB) test or to successfully complete 6 degree applicable units to gain eligibility for federal financial aid. A student who does not possess a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, but who was enrolled in an eligible program any time prior to July 1, 2012, may be eligible to receive federal student aid under the prior ATB provision. Grossmont College WILL NOT accept ATB examination scores from other colleges. Refer to [Section 204](#) of this manual for specific ATB information.
- G. A student enrolled concurrently in high school and a community college is ineligible for federal financial aid regardless of the student's age.

201.2 Before receiving aid, the following statements and conditions must be met:

A. Statement of Educational Purpose

The student will use all funds from Title IV programs solely for educational or education-related purposes at Grossmont College. Recipients must also be informed that they may be required to repay any monies that cannot reasonably be attributed to educational expenses.

B. Normal Progress Standards

The student must maintain satisfactory progress in a course of study. Each institution must establish standards for academic progress for purposes of federal student aid. These standards must be in writing and applied consistently to all recipients, who must be made aware of the policy. If the recipient is not making satisfactory progress, payment must be withheld until satisfactory progress is demonstrated or financial aid has been reinstated through the petition/appeal process (see [Section 602](#)).

C. Statement of Registration Compliance

The student who is required by law to register with the Selective Service must meet this requirement. Refer to the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook (Volume 1, Chapter 2) for a

listing of the various categories and all acceptable documentation.

D. Drug Convictions

Students with drug convictions that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV, HEA financial assistance will NOT be eligible for financial aid per the following standards:

- a) A student who has been convicted of any offense under any Federal or State law involving the possession or sale of a controlled substance shall not be eligible to receive any Title IV grant, loan, or work assistance during the period beginning on the date of such conviction and ending after the interval specified in the following table:

- i. If convicted of an offense involving the possession of a controlled substance ineligibility period is:

First Offense – 1 year
Second Offense – 2 years
Third Offense – Indefinitely

- ii. If convicted of an offense involving the sale of a controlled substance ineligibility period is:

First Offense – 1 year
Second Offense – Indefinitely

- b) A student whose eligibility has been suspended may resume eligibility before the end of the ineligibility period if—

The student satisfactorily completes a drug rehabilitation program that complies with such criteria, as the Secretary shall prescribe in regulations for purposes of this paragraph; and includes two unannounced drug tests; or the conviction is reversed, set aside, or otherwise rendered nugatory.

- c) Students determined to be ineligible for federal financial aid because of the drug conviction rules, may provide a signed written statement to the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office that they have completed a drug rehabilitation program. No other documentation will be required.

E. Repayment of Fraudulently obtained Title IV Funds

A student who has been convicted of, or has pled guilty (nolo contendere) to, a crime involving fraud in obtaining Title IV, HEA financial assistance must have completely repaid the fraudulently obtained funds to the Secretary, or to the holder of the loan in the case of a Title IV, HEA loan, before regaining eligibility for Title IV, HEA financial assistance.

202. DOCUMENTATION

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

202.1 All students applying for Financial Aid should receive:

- The Student Guide to Financial Aid.
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act application.
- A Federal Direct Loan Application packet if they are applying for a loan. All students

applying for a Federal Direct Student Loan must apply for campus-based aid and/or a Federal Pell Grant before a loan application will be certified to determine the EFC and eligibility for other financial assistance.

A. **Dependency**

- If a student answers “yes” to any of the dependency questions, the student is independent.
- If the student answers “no” to all of the dependency questions, the student is dependent.
- Schools cannot use professional judgment and substitute another party as a parent. (e.g. foster parent or a legal guardian, or surviving step parent unless they legally adopted the student.)
- An applicant whose unborn child will be born before the end of the award year may be considered independent.

Documentation required if independent:

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

If a student is an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, or at risk of being homeless, a financial aid Homeless Verification form signed by the certifying official or liaison of the high school district, or director/coordinator of emergency shelter or transitional housing program or the director/coordinator of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program. In lieu of the financial aid verification form, a signed letter on letterhead by any of the above officials listed.

Furthermore, in accordance with Dear Colleague Letter GEN-15-16: “If written documentation to support the applicant’s claim of homelessness is not available, the FAA’s determination may be made based on a documented interview with the applicant. FAAs should be able to show that their policies and procedures are compliant with statutory requirements.” The procedures outlined in the *Making Student Status Determinations for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Eligibility Tool for Financial Aid Administrators* form and all supporting information obtained via the student interview meet these statutory requirements.

Orphan

If the student is an orphan, copies of the parents’ death certificates are required.

Former Foster Youth/Ward/Dependent of the Court

If the student was a foster youth/ward/dependent of the court (under California Welfare & Institutions Code 300) after their 13th birthday*, a statement from the caseworker or a copy of the court order is required to verify this status.

*In some cases foster youth are released from juvenile court jurisdiction (WIC Code 300), or are “emancipated” from court jurisdiction at the age of 17. This usually occurs because the student has graduated from high school, is almost 18 years of age and wants to leave the group home/foster home placement. These students should file as if the foster youth/ward/dependent of the court status existed on their 18th birthday.
Please note “emancipation” from juvenile court jurisdiction under WIC Code 300 is not the same as Civil Emancipation under California Family Code 7001 et seq., in which a person under 18 voluntarily goes to court to be legally released from the custody and care of his or her parents (aka, Child actor Macaulay Culkin).

Students who are made a ward of the court because of a juvenile record (WIC Code 601 & 602) are not necessarily considered independent under this provision. A student must have been taken out of the parents’ home and made a dependent of the court (WIC Code 602).

Documentation required for dependent status:

None

Students, who do not meet the dependency requirements but maintain they are independent, should be referred to a Financial Aid Advisor.

B. Citizenship

Secondary confirmation will be done automatically by the Department of Education's central processor. We are not required to collect the documents from the student and submit for secondary confirmation unless the Department's secondary match is unsuccessful. At that point, we would begin the mandatory paper confirmation process.

For applicants whose eligible non-citizen status is not verified through the data base match, the institution is required to transmit copies of the applicant's documentation status to the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for official confirmation (secondary confirmation). Secondary confirmation is required each year that a student applies and is not verified through the match unless the school previously certified that the student is a U.S. citizen or national and has the appropriate documentation on file (as detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 2 of the [Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook](#)). Aid may be disbursed if the Department of Homeland Security does not respond to a request for secondary confirmation within 15 business days and there is no conflicting documentation or reason to believe the documentation submitted by the student is incorrect.

For applicants who are citizens, before aid is disbursed, the student must present original documentation that verifies they are a citizen. In this case, the C code can remain on the student's record. Unlike the case of eligible noncitizens, documents are not submitted to the DHS or any other agency for verification, but the institution needs to keep a copy in the student's file. Older versions of the Certificate of Citizenship and of the Certificate of Naturalization instruct the holder not to photocopy them. The USCIS has advised the Department that these documents (and others) may be photocopied for lawful purposes such as documenting eligibility for FSA funds. The student should also contact the Social Security Administration to update its database so the record will pass the SSA Citizenship match without delay in future years, although this is not required to receive aid.

C. Ability to Benefit

1. 18 years of age or older – students enrolling for the first time after July 1, 2012 must have a High School Diploma, GED or state recognized equivalent to be eligible for federal financial aid. New students will no longer have the option to pass an Ability to Benefit (ATB) test or to successfully complete 6 degree applicable units to gain eligibility for federal financial aid. A student who does not possess a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, but who was enrolled in an eligible program any time prior to July 1, 2012, may be eligible to receive federal student aid under the prior ATB provision. If a student is determined to have been previously enrolled in an eligible Title IV program, the Financial Aid Director or Financial Aid Supervisor will make case-by-case referrals to the Assessment office for an ATB test to be administered.

Grossmont College does not accept ATB examination scores from other colleges.

2. Under 18 years of age – A student must have a high school diploma (a Certificate of Completion is NOT a high school diploma) or pass the California Proficiency Exam to be eligible to receive financial aid.

D. Attendance at Other Schools

1. Academic Transcripts – official transcripts should be submitted to Admissions and Records for Advanced Standing. On a case-by-case basis, student may be required to submit official academic transcripts to Admissions & Records.
2. Transfer Monitoring – schools are required to participate in the Federal Transfer Monitoring process to determine remaining eligibility for mid-year transfer students and to identify potential overpayments.
3. Unusual Enrollment History – There is a flag in NSLDS for students whose pattern of enrollment and/or award history for either Pell or Direct Loans is identified as unusual. To resolve this issue, enrollment must be verified and official academic transcripts must be sent to the Grossmont College Admissions & Records office. Unofficial transcripts may be accepted on a case-by-case exception basis.

E. If students have been selected for Verification by the Department of Education or the institution, the following documentation may be required. Students must submit all required verification documents before the application is considered complete for awarding of aid (see [Section 508](#)).

1. Taxable Income

Documentation required if independent:

- Student/Spouse Federal IRS Tax Transcript for base year and amended return, if applicable. For students who successfully report their tax information via the IRS DRT, a tax transcript will not generally be required.
- Verification worksheet for independent students.
- All W-2s used to file taxes for base year, if filed jointly.

Documentation required for dependent status:

- Student's Federal IRS Tax Transcript for base year and amended return, if applicable. For students who successfully report their tax information via the IRS DRT, a tax transcript will not generally be required.
- Parents' Federal IRS Tax Transcript for base year. For parents who successfully report their tax information via the IRS DRT, a tax transcript will not generally be required.
- Verification Worksheet for dependent students.
- All W-2s used to file taxes for base year, if parents filed jointly.

An individual who is required to file taxes but has not and will not file, must file their taxes or get a letter from the IRS stating that they are not required to file.

If a filing extension has been granted from the IRS, a copy of the extension request (IRS Form 4868) and, if applicable, a copy of IRS's approval of an extension beyond the four month period automatically granted must be provided. Copies of all W-2 forms for that year, or if self-employed, a signed statement certifying the amount of adjusted gross income for the base year must be provided.

2. Nontaxable Income

If the student and/or parent received nontaxable income, the following documentation may be required:

- BAS – Year end Leave and Earning Statement (LES) for the base year
- VA Education Work Study Earning Statement

3. Income Certification

Grossmont College may also select students for Verification if there are ISIR comment codes which indicate a potential conflict in verifiable data elements or if the household income seems unusually low. In addition to the documentation outlined in sub-sections 1 and 2 above, the student may be required to submit:

- Income Certification Form

F. Unit Maximums Exceeded

If the student has attempted 90 or more units or completed 71 or more units, a Petition will be required. For students with an educational goal of achieving a certificate, the student unit maximums are 36 or more units completed and/or 45 or more units attempted. Students who will reach their unit maximums because of the planned enrollment in the Fall semester, will only be funded for Fall. Students will be notified that they need to petition for Spring semester (see [Section 602](#)).

G. Non-Normal Progress

Students who have made Non-Normal Progress according to [Section 602](#) of this manual due to deficient units and/or low GPA must petition.

H. ESL students

Students enrolled in ESL courses must have taken the CELSA exam and have an educational plan on file in the Financial Aid Office.

- 202.2 If Parents of Dependent Student Refuse to Submit Income Verification. Aid shall be denied unless extenuating circumstances, fully documented, warrant an exception.
- 202.3 If Income Information is Judged Inadequate. Aid may be denied.
- 202.4 When Unusual Circumstances Exist. All circumstances and reasons for decisions made by the Financial Aid Advisor must be carefully documented. If warranted, the student will be requested to submit a signed statement about the circumstances and signed letter of explanation from an adult relative or family friend who can attest to the circumstances.
- 202.5 Expenses Claimed in Budget. The expenses listed below must be documented.
- A. Disability expenses – educationally related expenses not covered by other agencies to a maximum of \$1,000 per academic year using the Request for Allowance for Disabled Students Costs.
- B. Dependent Care - documented costs that are reasonable for the number and ages of dependents and not covered by other agencies.

203. DEPENDENCY STATUS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 203.1 The federal definition of an independent student is any individual who is 24 years old or older by December 31 of the award year or an individual who meets any one of the following criteria:
- A. An orphan or ward of the court.
- B. A student who was in a court appointed legal guardianship until the age of majority as defined by their state of residence.
- C. A student who was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless (or at risk of being homeless) on or after July 1, 2015 (status determined by high school liaison, director/coordinator of an emergency shelter program, or director/coordinator of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program).
- D. A veteran or an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.
- E. Any individual with legal dependents other than a spouse. If a student under 24 years of age with children is living with parents, determine if parents claimed the child in the base years. If so, then student once again becomes dependent, unless the student has provided more than one-half of the child's support. An applicant whose unborn child will be born before the end of the award year (June 30) can answer "Yes" to this.
- F. Any graduate or professional student.
- G. Any married or separated student.
- H. A student for whom a financial aid administrator determines and documents the student's independent status based on unusual circumstances (under Section 203.5 below).
- 203.2 For purposes of State financial aid only, a student in a Registered Domestic Partnership with the California Secretary of State, will be treated as "married" and, therefore, Independent.
- 203.3 For purposes of State financial aid only, a student whose parent is in a Registered Domestic Partnership with the California Secretary of State, will be treated the same as a student with married parents.
- 203.4 Those who may be included as a parent for purposes of the FAFSA are:

- Both parents (biological or adoptive), regardless of marital status if they are living with each other;
- Only the surviving parent, if parent is widowed and not remarried;
- Only the biological parent with whom the student lived or who provided more financial support during the 12 month period prior to filing the FAFSA, if parents are separated or divorced;
- Both the above biological parent and stepparent, if they are married to one another as of the date of the FAFSA application; or,
- A parent (biological or adoptive) who is single

Schools cannot use professional judgment and substitute another party as a parent.

Those who are not considered a parent on the FAFSA include, but are not limited to:

- Foster parents – unless they have legally adopted the student
- Surviving stepparents – unless they have legally adopted the student
- Legal guardians

203.5 Those students who are classified as dependent due to the criteria above may be considered independent under professional judgment. In extreme hardship cases, the Financial Aid Office may be able to assist a student who is technically dependent, but who does not or cannot have contact with his/her parents. This will apply to situations where the student's physical or emotional welfare is jeopardized by contact with the parents or where abandonment can be demonstrated. In such cases, the student must complete the *REQUEST FOR DEPENDENCY STATUS OVERRIDE* form and provide written documentation from a third party professional (e.g. minister, psychologist, social worker, etc.). A dependency override may also be appropriate for a student in a Registered Domestic Partnership with the California Secretary of State. Official documentation of the partnership will be required as part of the request.

204. ABILITY TO BENEFIT

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Students enrolling for the first time after July 1, 2012 must have a High School Diploma, GED or state recognized equivalent to be eligible for federal financial aid. New students will no longer have the option to pass an Ability to Benefit (ATB) test or to successfully complete 6 degree applicable units to gain eligibility for federal financial aid. A student who does not possess a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, but who was enrolled in an eligible program any time prior to July 1, 2012, may be eligible to receive federal student aid under the prior ATB provision.

If a student is determined to have been previously enrolled in an eligible Title IV program, the Financial Aid Director or Financial Aid Supervisor will make case-by-case referrals to the Assessment office for an ATB test to be administered.

Grossmont College does not accept ATB examination scores from other colleges.

205. CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Units taken concurrently at Grossmont College and Cuyamaca College may be accepted for financial aid purposes if a student has filed a consortium agreement. A student must apply for financial aid and file a consortium agreement at the college where he/she has declared a major and must be enrolled in a minimum of six *overall* units combined at both institutions. The student must be registered in all courses listed on the consortium agreement by census day and the courses must also be required for the student's educational objective. The student must maintain enrollment in at least one course at Grossmont College or the consortium agreement will be cancelled. Consortium Agreement forms can only be submitted once per term and should be submitted before Census Day, but no later than the Consortium deadline. The deadline dates are as follows: Fall 2016 consortiums must be submitted by November 10, 2016 and Spring 2017 consortiums must be submitted by April 28, 2017. The Summer Consortium deadline is published every year in the [Student Guide to Financial Aid](#). Consortium agreements must be filled out for each term.

206. FINANCIAL AID ACADEMIC ADVISING WORKSHOP & COUN 095

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

WORKSHOP

Financial Aid applicants who have not met Pace of Progression SAP standards or new Financial Aid applicants with more than seven deficient units and/or a GPA below 2.0 must fulfill this requirement. The purpose of this workshop is to educate Financial Aid students about SAP requirements and academic issues as they pertain to student success at Grossmont College. Students attending the workshop will learn about financial aid SAP policies and procedures, available support services that will help them succeed and planning resources that will assist them in maintaining good academic standing.

COUN 095

Grossmont College financial aid recipients who are not making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) after each term run, will be required to enroll in and successfully complete COUN 095 "Academic/Financial Aid Planning". A student's Financial Aid application will not be completed until this course requirement has been met. The purpose of this class is to educate Financial Aid students who have been placed on Financial Aid Disqualification status about Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements and financial aid application procedures as they pertain to student success at Grossmont College. Students attending the class will learn about support services available that will help them succeed and planning resources that will assist them in developing a two semester plan for Grossmont College. Additional success topics include note-taking, time-management, study skills and stress management.

On a case-by-case basis, if a disabled student (w/ a documented disability) is required to complete the Financial Aid/Counseling Workshop, then one-on-one sessions may be provided.

Exceptions:

1. On a case-by-case basis, if a disabled student (w/ a documented disability) is required to complete the Financial Aid Workshop, then one-on-one sessions may be provided.
2. On a case-by-case basis, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKS and DSPS Counselors can recommend that the COUN 095 be waived in lieu of an Educational from said counselor.

CHAPTER III
STUDENT BUDGETS

A student budget is defined as the expenses related to attendance at the educational institution during a specified period. Student budgets have been established as a guide to ensure equitable consideration of all students. These budgets are reviewed each year to reflect changes in state and local cost-of-living figures. In addition, adjustments are considered for students with unusual expenses or circumstances as described below.

301. EXPENSES

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

301.1 Direct Educational Costs

- A. See Chart ([301.7](#)) for current allowances for fees, books and supplies and tuition charges.
- B. Special Class Supplies: When the student's program of study necessitates unusual expenses for books or supplies, such as Health Science majors, engineering, art, TSI, photography, etc. a fixed increase (to a maximum of \$400 per semester) in the budget is allowed. However, no aid funds should be allowed unless it is an absolute requirement for a specific program.

301.2 Indirect Educational Costs

- A. See Chart ([301.7](#)) for current allowances for rent, food, personal and transportation expenses.
- B. Budgets will not be affected because of food stamps or housing subsidies.

301.3 Other Allowable Expenses

A. Disabled

An allowance to a maximum of \$1200 will be considered for students with disabilities who require services or special equipment not covered by other agencies (i.e. Vocational Rehabilitation funds). Students must submit the Request for Allowance for Disabled Student Costs.

B. Dependent Care

Documented costs (typically for 9 months) that are reasonable for the number and ages of dependents not covered by other agencies.

C. Direct Loan Fees

Students applying for Direct Student Loans will have an average loan fee amount of \$60 added to the student budget.

301.4 Summer Expenses

Summer expenses will be figured on a maximum two-month basis for all categories of awards.

301.5 Budget Classifications

- A. Students who have an "At Home" budget and provide a signed copy of their rental agreement that lists them on the rental agreement will be given an "Away from Home" budget.
- B. In special circumstances where the parent(s) have low income and assets and the student is supporting the parent(s), the student may be given an "Away from Home" budget. In this instance, the parent is generally disabled or infirmed and a roommate situation exists.
- C. If the student is living with adult relatives who are acting in loco parentis, an "At Home" budget may be used.
- D. Former Foster Youth and Homeless students may be given an "Away from Home" budget.

- E. A single parent living at home may receive an “At Home” budget and a childcare allowance if documented using the Child Care Provider Form.
- F. A married student living at home will receive an “At Home” budget and a childcare allowance if documented.
- G. A “With Relative” budget is given in cases where the student is living with relatives and is not being supported by them or the student lives off campus, but is only incurring “with relative” expenses.

301.6 Professional Judgement Adjustments to COA

An Aid Administrator may use PJ on a case-by-case basis to adjust a student’s Cost of Attendance. Adjustments must be documented and are generally done for medical, dental or nursing home/hospice care costs not covered by insurance within the student’s enrollment period. For more information on other types of Professional Judgement, see Chapter 4.

301.7 Budgets^

	<u>AT HOME</u>	<u>AWAY FROM HOME</u>	<u>WITH RELATIVES</u>
Fees	1,326	1,326	1,326
Books & Supplies*	1,700	1,700	1,700
Food & Housing	4,600	11,300	8,200
Transportation	1,200	1,200	1,200
Personal Expenses	<u>2,500</u>	<u>2,800</u>	<u>2,800</u>
TOTAL +	11,326	18,326	15,226

+Estimated actual dependent care expenses

+Expenses related to a disability not covered by another agency

+OST at \$211 per unit for an average of 14 units per semester for 2 semesters = \$5,908

^GCCCD Student Expense Budgets assume roommate situations and are developed with data gathered annually from the California Student Aid Commission and periodic surveys of regional housing costs.

*Includes books, educational supplies, course material fees and computer related expenses (excluding the costs associated with the purchase of a personal computer).

LESS THAN HALF TIME COST OF ATTENDANCE FOR ACADEMIC YEAR

	<u>CAMPUS BASED AID</u>	<u>PELL GRANT</u>
Fees	314	1,326
Books & Supplies	425	1,700
Transportation	<u>300</u>	<u>1,200</u>
TOTAL+	1,039	4,226

*Assumes \$46 per unit based on an average $\frac{1}{2}$-time load of 3 units per semester as of Fall census

+Estimated actual dependent care expenses

+OST of \$5,908 for Pell Grant and \$1,200 for Campus Based Aid

CHAPTER IV

NEED ANALYSIS

The purpose of need analysis is to assess a family's financial resources to determine a reasonable amount that is expected to help meet the cost of post-secondary education. A uniform set of criteria is used to make this assessment in need analysis. Although the criteria may appropriately be applied to a wide variety of family situations, there are cases in which strict adherence to the criteria may not be appropriate. Deciding whether the standard procedures apply to a given case is left to the discretion of the financial aid administrator.

401. STANDARD NEED ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Since the establishment of a broadly used scheme of need analysis in the early 1950s, the system has been modified from time to time to provide a systematic approach to measuring family ability to pay for college. Beginning in 1975, the need analysis system most widely used was the Uniform Methodology, which was a product of the National Task Force on Student Aid Problems. Most (but not all) aspects of the Uniform Methodology were imbedded in the need analysis provisions of the 1986 amendments to the Higher Education Act. Because of the 1992 amendments, the need analysis systems for Pell Grant and campus based aid were consolidated and renamed and shall be referred to as the Federal Needs Analysis Methodology.

In need analysis, the aid administrator uniformly applies the same objective standards to all applicants, while taking into account, in individual cases, circumstances that may affect the relative financial strength of a family. The need analysis system is designed to accommodate obligatory expenses, such as taxes, as well as typical family living costs. In many instances, even unusual expenses, such as excessive medical or dental costs, may be addressed by special provisions of the need analysis methodology.

An understanding of the basic principles of need analysis is essential to the review of any case. Among these tenets are the following:

- For dependent students, both the student and parents share the obligation to contribute toward educational expenses.
- For independent students, it is expected that a major part of the student's income and assets will be allocated to the student's educational costs as well as the family's living expenses.
- Families are considered equitably in relation to one another—that is, there is “horizontal equity” among families in similar situations and “vertical equity” among those in dissimilar situations.
- The analysis of a family's situation is an objective assessment of its present circumstances; it does not make assumptions or prejudge the nature of their situation.
- Progressive assessment rates are used to calculate the family contribution so that those with greater resources have a larger proportion of those resources deemed available for educational expenses than those families of more modest means.
- Need analysis procedures recognize that part of family resources must be devoted to taxes, basic living costs, and other unavoidable expenses; other expenditures that are a matter of family choice are usually not included as allowances against available income or discretionary net worth.

The latter point is an important element of professional judgment in need analysis. That is, the aid administrator should be able to distinguish between changes in a family's circumstances that are a function of choice and those that are a function of necessity. Using this distinction in considering expenses will help the aid administrator make better decisions about a given family's circumstances.

402. PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Because each family's situation is unique, extraordinary circumstances occasionally will arise that require individual attention. In these cases the aid administrator is expected to weigh the family's situation both objectively and subjectively in order to render a professional judgment about the financial support that the family can reasonably provide toward the applicant's post-secondary expenses. Professional judgment represents a key factor in the student financial aid delivery system – the capacity for personal intervention by the aid administrator in cases that merit individual attention.

The need analysis procedures specified in Part F of Title IV of the Higher Education Act, as amended, will be used in determining need for federal funds. Both current regulations and law recognize, however, that adjustments may be made to data elements in need analysis. Indeed, the Higher Education Act provides that discretionary judgments may be employed. Section 479A(a) states:

Nothing in [Title IV] shall be interpreted as limiting the authority of the student financial aid administrator, on the basis of adequate documentation, to make necessary adjustments to the cost of attendance and expected family contribution (or both) to allow for treatment of individual students with special circumstances. In addition, nothing in this title shall be interpreted as limiting the authority of the student financial aid administrator to use supplementary information about the financial status or personal circumstance of eligible applicants in selecting recipients and determining the amounts of awards under [the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Family Educational Loan or the Federal Direct Loan Programs]. Special circumstances may include tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school, medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance, unusually high child care costs, recent unemployment of a family member, the number of parents enrolled at least half-time in a degree, certificate, or other program leading to a recognized educational credential at an institution with a program participation agreement under section 487, or other changes in a family's income, a family's assets, or a student's status.

Adjustments in need analysis may either result in an increase or decrease in the student's need. If the aid administrator is satisfied that the adjustment is based on verifiable information and may be justified as reasonable on grounds of professional judgment, the resulting need figure is valid for all forms of aid, regardless of source.

In considering the resources available to an independent student, it may be appropriate to expect a contribution from the student's parents. The conference committee managers of the 1986 bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act recognized this. In the conference report, they observed that:

[Section 479A of the Higher Education Act] allows the student financial aid administrator to make necessary adjustments to the need analysis computations based on additional knowledge about the financial status of students which they (sic) might have. This included not only allowing a more liberal financial aid package for some students, but also the ability to restrict aid for students who have additional sources of support not apparent in the analysis. For example, if an aid administrator was aware that a graduate or professional student was receiving support from his or her family, it is the intention of the conferees that the administrator would have the ability to reduce the student's eligibility for Federal assistance accordingly. The conferees are particularly concerned that students from high-income families who are enrolled in high cost programs and who would otherwise be considered independent of their parents be carefully evaluated to determine if a parental contribution is warranted.

Despite the possible expectation of a parent's contribution for an independent student, the aid administrator cannot shift a student from independent to dependent status for federal purposes if the student otherwise meets the requirements of the federal definition of an independent student.

403. PROJECTED INCOME

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

403.1 Standard need analysis methodology assesses prior year income rather than income received during the year the student is enrolled. Under professional judgment, projected year income (January – December) may be used in determining need. Student must provide the request in writing and document that the circumstances surrounding their request were extenuating. A “choice” made by a student, in and of itself, is not necessarily a reason to use professional judgment. Academic year

income (comprised of 12 months of income) may be considered in extreme cases (e.g., student has become disabled).

- 403.2 Documentation of earnings to date or other untaxed income must be provided. Projected year income will usually not be considered until October of the projected year. Calculations for projected year income are done using the Tax Table Method, in which projections are made to current year income using prior year tax tables to give the closest possible approximation.
- 403.3 The use of projected income will generally be done only once.
- 403.4 A veteran's discharge from the military is not grounds for professional judgment unless it was because of extenuating circumstances, which may include but is not limited to medical reason or disability. This would not apply to a reservist who was called to active duty and is now back in reserve status or has been discharged.
- 403.5 Parent's remarriage after initial application. While the applicant does not update household size or number in college because of a change in his or her marital status, if he or she is a dependent student and the parent remarries between application and verification, the student must update household size to include the new stepparent. However, the student would not include the new stepparent's income and assets. The school could use professional judgment to include the stepparent's income or to account for the change. Refer to 2016-2017 Federal Student Aid Handbook, Application and Verification Guide for updates on marital status for independent and dependent students.
- 403.6 In dealing with a "one-time payment" (inheritance, settlement etc.), we will take into consideration whether or not the one-time payment is "special" in terms of the circumstances around which it was awarded or in terms of how it is to be used. A one-time payment is not a "special circumstance" just because it is a one-time payment.

404. NEEDS ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 404.1 The formula types will be used in this order:
- Automatic Zero EFC
 - Simple
 - Regular
- 404.2 If an applicant qualifies for the simple needs test and there is a secondary needs test, it will be the policy of the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office to always use the simple needs test. The secondary needs test may be used through professional judgment.
- 404.3 For students who do not qualify for the simple needs test, the regular need test must be used.
- 404.4 Need Analysis Description
- A. The Higher Education Amendments (HEA) of 1992 mandated one need analysis for all Title IV programs, called the Federal Needs Analysis Methodology. This methodology has three models or applicant types:
 - Dependent;
 - Independent with dependents (other than a spouse); and
 - Independent without dependents (other than a spouse).
 - B. The Federal Needs Analysis Methodology calculates the Expected Family Contribution (EFC), using either the:
 - Regular formula
 - Simplified formula
 - Automatic Zero EFC formula – the automatic eligibility criteria for a Zero EFC is not applicable to a single or married independent student without dependents other than a spouse.

For specific details on all the federal formulas, see the [EFC Formula Guide](#).

C. Parents in College

The parents will not be added back into the number in college for purposes of determining the EFC. Parents have the option of applying for financial assistance for themselves, at which time, dependent children and the parent will be included in the number in college.

Number in Household and Number in College

People who are over the age of 23 and are being listed on a dependent worksheet in the parent's household will be left in the parent's household only if they were claimed on the parent's prior year tax return and they are not in college, thereby demonstrating that the parent provided more than 50% of the support. This person would also be eligible to be included in the Number in College.

405. INCOME AND ASSETS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

405.1 Bankruptcy or Foreclosure

Income resulting from voluntary or involuntary forfeiture, foreclosure, or bankruptcy or involuntary liquidation of farm assets is excluded from the calculation of EFC for Pell and campus based aid.

405.2 Evaluating an IRS Tax Transcript

Schedule K-1: when entering amounts from Schedule K-1 (Box 14 Code A from form 1065) they must be entered on wages only. Do not add this amount to the AGI.

405.3 Untaxed Income

- A. The basic allowance for subsistence (also known as BAS) will be included as untaxed income for military employees.
- B. Other untaxed income not reported in FAFSA items 45a through 45j, such as workers' compensation, disability, etc. Also include the first-time homebuyer tax credit from IRS Form 1040.
- C. **Don't include** student aid, earned income credit, additional child tax credit, welfare payments, untaxed Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Workforce Investment Act educational benefits, on-base military housing or a military housing allowance, combat pay, benefits from flexible spending arrangements (e.g., cafeteria plans), foreign income exclusion or credit for federal tax on special fuels.

405.4 FEMA Assistance

No special aid received by victims of a disaster from the Federal Government or from a State, for the purpose of providing financial relief, will be counted as income, other resources, or other financial assistance for the purpose of calculating a family's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). This aid may, for example, take the form of grants or low-interest loans."

405.5 Other Student Income

- A. Cash Support is to be included as untaxed income, except support from the student's parents IF THEY ARE DEPENDENT. The basic rule is: if someone pays a cost that the student would otherwise pay (in other words, is otherwise responsible for paying on their own as a result of being on a Lease Agreement), the amount counts as cash support. This includes:
 - Rent paid on the student's behalf or money given to the student for rent when the student's name is on a Lease Agreement. Because the student's name is on the

lease, he is responsible for the payments that his friend/relative is making on his behalf and the rent paid counts as cash support. This could also include housing and other allowances received as compensation for a job, which must also be reported. (ref. – questions #2 & #3 on the 2015 Income & Expense Certification form)

- Other living expenses (i.e. food, clothing, utilities, transportation, etc.) paid on the student's behalf or money given to the student to cover living expenses that were actually incurred by the student. (ref. – question #4 on the 2015 Income & Expense Certification form)

B. In-kind Support is other than money, such as free food or housing. In contrast to the rent and other living expenses defined above as Cash Support, In-kind Support directly results from the fact that the student is not being held responsible for paying the rent and other living expenses because they are not on the Lease Agreement.

C. Other examples of In-kind Support – (**NOT COUNTED AS CASH SUPPORT AND NOT INCLUDED IN QUESTION 45 FOR STUDENT OR QUESTION 94 FOR PARENT**):

- Food Stamp Program (SNAP)
- Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)
- Food Distribution Program
- National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
- Special Milk Program for Children
- Daycare provided by the Social Services Block Grant Programs (if the recipient receives **reimbursement** for childcare expenses, that amount is reported as income)
- WIA (formerly JTPA) educational benefits
- Rollover Pensions
- Payments and services received from states for foster care or adoption assistance, under Part A or Part E of Title IV of the Social Security Act
- Grant or loan monies received by victims of a disaster for the purpose of providing financial relief

406. RESOURCES

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

406.1 Parental Contribution

- A. Based upon a review of the federal need analysis system, the amount of parental contribution will be counted as a resource for all dependent students.
- B. Modification of Contribution. Adjustments may be made **only** by adjusting particular data elements used in the EFC calculation, not by adjusting the methodology or the EFC figure. Such action must be documented (for example, parent may have lost job, incurred excessive medical expenses, become disabled, etc.).
- C. Contribution Not Received. Although parental contribution may not be forthcoming, Subsidized Federal Stafford Student Loan cannot be substituted for such contribution.
- D. Adjustment to Contribution for Periods Other Than Nine Months. For dependent students, the parents' contribution continues to be adjusted, up or down, based on the number of months of enrollment. The formula for making this adjustment appears in the Department of Education publication [The Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook](#).
- E. For both independent and dependent students, the EFC is prorated down for periods of enrollment that are less than 9 months. For periods greater than 9 months, the 9-month EFC is used.
- F. When separating income, a straight percentage calculation will be done using the Proportional Distribution Method: calculate what percentage of the joint Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) was attributed to the student (or parent) and then assess the joint Taxes Paid

and the joint Earned Income Credit by the same percentage [income ÷ by AGI = 's % of total student/parent income – multiply percentage by the amount of Taxes Paid and Earned Income Credit].

CHAPTER V

AWARDING FINANCIAL AID

501. PACKAGING

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

Every eligible applicant should receive a combination of financial aid based on the student's qualifications, financial need, preference, student's academic and family situation, and criteria developed annually by the Financial Aid Office for equitable distribution of grant aid and self-help aid. The Financial Aid Office has the right to modify awards subject to the availability of funds and to eliminate potential overawards.

501.1 General Packaging Guidelines

- A. The SAM system will calculate need (budget minus EFC). Aid is awarded based on an awarding hierarchy.
10. Financial aid will be awarded in the following order until need is met:
1. Cal Works Grant
 2. Board of Governor's Waiver
 3. Scholarships
 4. Dreamkeepers
 5. EOPS/CARE Vouchers
 6. Federal Pell Grant
 7. Child Development Grant
 8. Chafee Grant
 9. Cal Grant B or C
 10. College Work-Study (CWS)
 11. Full-time Student Success Grant (FSSG)
 12. CalWorks Work Study
 13. CalWorks/Federal College Work Study (75/25)
 14. SEOG
 15. EOPS
 16. CARE
 17. Cooperative Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support (CAFYES)
 18. Student Equity Direct Support programs
 19. EOPS Work Study (none for 2015-16)
 20. New Horizons Grant
 21. Nursing Student Loan (none for 2015-16)
 22. Direct Loans
10. The minimum FWS award for the year will be \$900 (or \$450 per semester).
- D. Low Need Figure:
10. Because of limited funding, no Federal Work Study will be awarded to students with a remaining need of \$899 or less after Federal Pell Grant is awarded. Exceptions will be made only with the concurrence of the Director of Financial Aid.
- E. No awards are made for less than \$100 per academic year per program.
- F. First priority for FSEOG is to full-time students living away from home. Awards are based on EFC's with the largest award going to students with EFC's of 0. SEOG funds will be awarded to students living away from home with EFC's up to 2000. At home students with EFC's of 0 will be awarded SEOG.

502. RETROACTIVE AWARDS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 502.1 Students who must petition for non-normal progress are not eligible for retroactive awards if the petition is approved. Students who petition only because they have hit their unit maximums are eligible for a retroactive award because they need additional units to complete their objective and they have made satisfactory progress.
- 502.2 Students who must petition for lack of progress because they did not pass the appropriate number of units, or whose GPA is below a 2.0 are not eligible for a retroactive award. Petitions approved prior to the end of the term, but not awarded until after the term, may have the prior semesters aid awarded. Retroactive awards are based on units completed. Units completed include “F” or “NC” grades. It does not include “W” or “I”. Students who only petition for hitting their unit maximums units are eligible for a retroactive award.
- 502.3 At the time of loan certification, if the student is in non-normal progress status for the prior fall, no retroactive fall loan amount will be certified (this includes probation status).
- 502.4 Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive Pell Grant for the term in which the default was resolved. Pell Grant may not be paid to a prior term in which the student was in default unless the default was resolved in that prior term.
- 502.5 Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive SEOG for the term in which the default was resolved. SEOG may not be paid to a prior term in which the student was in default unless the default was resolved in that prior term.
- 502.6 Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive CWS for the term in which the default was resolved. CWS may not be paid for a prior term in which the student was in default unless the default was resolved in that prior term.
- 502.7 Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive a Direct Loan for the academic year in which the default was resolved. This is different from eligibility for Pell and campus based aid that only allows payment for the period in which the student regained eligibility.

503. PRIORITIES FOR AWARDING

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 503.1 Campus-Based Aid – Students will be initially awarded on a first-completed, first-served basis. Some funds will be held in reserve for late Fall and early Spring reallocation as well as targeted dissemination to promote student engagement on a case-by-case basis. Within the initial group, funds will be awarded first to students with the earliest FAFSA processing date and then according to the greatest need.
10. Should funds become available, unmet need resulting from funds exhausted will be met on the basis of earliest FAFSA processing date and then according to the greatest need.
 10. Highest priority for summer work-study will be given to continuing students who have complete files by April 1. Applications completed after April 1 will be considered on a funds available basis.
 10. Students identified as eligible foster youth, veterans or Umoja program participants may be given priority for Federal Work Study *reallocation* funds.
- 503.2 Federal Pell-Grant – Deadline dates to apply, to submit corrections to the processor, and to submit a SAR to the Financial Aid Office are established annually by the federal government. The deadline dates for submission of complete applications will be as follows:
10. For students not enrolled in Summer school, the deadline to complete a file with the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office is 5 business days after last day of the semester.
 10. For students enrolled in Summer school, the deadline to complete a 2015-2016 file with the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office is August 15, 2016.

504. DISBURSEMENTS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 504.1 FSEOG, EOPS, CARE, CAFYES and Cal Grant B and C – are generally disbursed twice per semester. Checks are mailed or sent via EFT on the dates listed on the GCCCD disbursement schedule.
- 504.2 Federal Work-Study (FWS), CalWorks and EOPS Work-Study – paychecks are disbursed on the 5th of each month from the Campus Business Office.
- 504.3 Child Development and Chafee Grants – checks must be picked up at the Cashier’s outside windows A and B on the east side of the Bookstore.
- 504.4 Pell Grant is generally disbursed twice per semester. Checks are mailed or sent via EFT on the dates listed on the disbursement schedule. Pell Book Vouchers are made available to eligible students one week before the beginning of the Fall or Spring term. Book Vouchers are not available for summer enrollment.
- 504.5 FSSG is generally disbursed once per semester. Checks are mailed or sent via EFT on the dates listed on the disbursement schedule.
- 504.6 Direct Student Loans are generally disbursed once per semester. If the student is a one-semester-only certification, then the loan checks will be disbursed twice a semester. Checks are mailed or sent via EFT on the dates listed on the disbursement schedule.
- 504.7 Prior to each disbursement, a student’s eligibility will be re-confirmed. Eligibility includes units, financial need, residency, and all other applicable program eligibility requirements. A student who fails to meet program eligibility requirements will have their aid suspended and/or cancelled.
- 504.8 Grossmont College will not disburse federal Pell, Direct Loan or SEOG funds to a student who is enrolled in only second 8-week courses until the 1st ay of instruction for that particular session. This policy also applies to other courses that have start dates which occur after the college census date.
- 504.9 Students who are only enrolled in distance education (on-line) courses must reside in California during that semester to be eligible for financial aid. Students must verify their place of residence with the Financial Aid Office before any disbursement may be made. Students enrolled in on-line courses only who live outside of California are not eligible for federal financial aid.
- 504.10 At the time of disbursement, if the student still owes any mandatory fees (i.e. Out-of-state Tuition and per unit enrollment fees) for that particular term, then any federal grant, federal loan and scholarship aid will be deducted and will be credited to that outstanding balance owed.

Check mailing procedures

10. Financial Aid checks will be mailed generally once per month by District Accounting on the dates listed on the approved Disbursement Schedule. Each campus will mail the following checks:

Grossmont College

Pell
SEOG
Cal Grant B
Cal Grant C
EOPS
CARE
CAFYES
Scholarships
Direct Student Loan

Cuyamaca College

Pell
SEOG
Cal Grant B
Cal Grant C
EOPS
CARE

Scholarships
Direct Student Loan

10. The Cashier will disburse the following financial aid checks with a School ID and valid photo ID.

Grossmont College**Cuyamaca College**

Alaska Student Loans
Chafee Grants
Child Development Grant

Alaska Student Loans
Chafee Grants
Child Development Grant
Scholarships

504.9 Returned checks/bad address

10. Non-deliverable checks will be returned to the District Accounting Office and hand delivered to Cashier for disbursement. Students will be required to update their address at the Cashier's Office before the check can be released.
10. The Cashier will hold checks for three weeks before returning them to Accounting for cancellation.

504.10 Lost or stolen check procedures for all aid programs.

10. After 15 working days from date of disbursement, the student must submit a written request to the Cashier (form supplied by the College Cashier's Office) to replace a lost or stolen check.
10. The Cashier will log in the request and forward it to the District Accounting Office to verify that the check has not been cashed. A stop payment will be placed on the check. The District Accounting Office will order a replacement check. This process may take up to 20 working days.
10. If the check has been cashed, the Bank will provide a copy of the canceled check. The District Accounting Office will compare the signature on the check with the student's signature on file. If it matches, no further action will be taken. The student will be notified. If the signature does not match, the Bank will investigate. A replacement check will be processed. Cashier's office will receive replacement check, log it in, and notify the student.
- D. If the student subsequently finds or receives the check, the student must return the check to the District because the Bank will not honor it.

505. REVISIONS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 505.1 Awards may be revised at the request of the student. Requests for adjustments must be in writing (if initiated by the student) and generally should be considered only once per semester, provided funding is available.
- 505.2 All revisions resulting in an increase or decrease of a student's award must be documented.
- 505.3 Allowable reasons for revisions include change in residence and documented additions to the budget.
- 505.4 Revisions in award amount for Pell, Cal Grant and campus-based aid will be made for changes in enrollment status resulting from census day.
- 505.5 The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to correct over-awards or make adjustments in aid due to changes in eligibility that occur in the award period, according to federal, state, and/or institutional guidelines.

506. RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

506.1 Students subject to return provisions

Students receiving federal financial aid, who withdraw from all of their classes during the first 60% of a term, may be required to repay a portion of the federal grants that they have received. That is because a student must “earn” their financial aid. Financial aid is “earned” for each day enrolled in the semester. Prior to each federal disbursement, the Return of Title IV job will be run to determine who has withdrawn. The return calculation will be done using the DOE’s software.

Title IV is awarded to a student under the assumption that the student will attend school for the entire semester for which the aid was awarded. When a student withdraws, the student may no longer be eligible for the full amount of aid that the student was originally scheduled to receive. The purpose of this calculation is to determine the earned and unearned amounts of federal aid the otherwise eligible student is entitled to.

Students who are in attendance until 60% of the term is completed won’t owe anything back to the federal government. For the Fall of 2015, students must be enrolled and attending classes until **October 29, 2015** to be eligible for all the financial aid received. For the Spring of 2016, students must be enrolled and attending classes until **April 12, 2016** to be eligible for all the financial aid received.

Students, who fail all of their classes in a term, will have only earned 50% of the Pell and/or SEOG that was received and will be billed for the amount not earned. A student with an instructor approved “Incomplete” grade will be considered to have been in class past the 60% period. A student who withdrew from a class after the 60% point in the term may not be subject to this provision even though they failed the remainder of their classes.

506.2 Repayment arrangements

Students who are required to repay Title IV funds will be billed for the amount owed and given 45 days in which to repay the funds in total. Students who fail to repay the funds within the 45 days will be referred to the Department of Education for collection.

The refund will be applied in the following order:

1. Pell Grant
2. SEOG
3. Any other Title IV program

Funds returned to any Title IV program may not exceed the amount disbursed from that program.

506.3 Overpayments

10. Institutions must return to the Direct Loan program any undelivered loan proceeds that exceed the amount for which the student is eligible. This over award provision is applicable only to undelivered loan proceeds. Once the proceeds of a particular disbursement have been delivered, either by negotiating the loan check and crediting the student’s account, or by releasing proceeds as a cash payment to the student directly, that disbursement is no longer subject to the over award provision. When an award in excess of need is identified after all Federal Direct Loan proceeds have been delivered, an over award does not exist and a refund is not required (assuming no institutional liability). However, action may be required under the federal and state need based aid program regulations if the student’s aid also includes campus- based funds.

10. An over award situation may occur when a student receives additional funds defined as estimated financial assistance, and the institution becomes aware of the additional assistance before all loan proceeds have been delivered. Over awards may also result from a recalculation of the family contribution before all proceeds have been delivered. Institutions are not required to identify over awards resulting from re-computation of a student’s cost of attendance due to changes in enrollment status or program.

10. An amount of over award from earnings is permitted under the Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program, if the institution decides to allow a student to continue working after the student has earned his or her full need. These amounts are not considered to be over awards for purposes of the Direct Loan Program. However, if there is no FWS in a student's package, the tolerance does not apply to loans.
 - D. If a student receives additional resources at any time during the award period and the total resources including the campus-based aid exceed the student's need, the amount that exceeds need is an over award. However, the institution is not required to take any action if the amount by which a student's resources exceed need falls within a certain tolerance, established by regulation.
 - E. If the institution becomes aware of additional financial assistance after certifying a loan but before receiving the loan proceeds, the institution can adjust the loan and either reduce or cancel the loan amount to eliminate the over award and re-submit to COD. At this point, the institution also has the option of reducing or canceling other aid over which it has control, such as campus-based or institutional aid.
 - F. Once the institution has received the loan proceeds, the over award must be eliminated by returning or canceling loan proceeds before adjusting campus-based aid. The only exception to this requirement that loan proceeds be returned first is an undisbursed portion of a Federal Work-Study award that the student is no longer able to accept due to extenuating circumstances.
 - G. Once the loan proceeds have been received by the institution and an over award exists prior to delivery of the proceeds, the institution may either return the entire amount of the loan proceeds and, if the over award is less than the disbursed amount, request a revised disbursement; or, the institution may negotiate the check (or obtain the student's authorization to release proceeds disbursed via EFT) and return only the portion of the disbursement representing the over award.
 - H. If the over award can be eliminated by reducing or canceling subsequent disbursements of the loan, the institution may do so and deliver the first disbursement. In any event, it is the institution, not the student, which must inform the Direct Loan program of any changes and return funds to them.
10. The institution must take the following steps when it learns that a student has received additional resources that would cause the student's total resources to exceed need by more than \$300.
 1. Decide whether the student has increased financial need that was unanticipated when the financial aid was awarded to the student. If the student demonstrates increased financial need and the total resources do not exceed this increased need by more than \$300, no further action is necessary.
 2. If no increased need is demonstrated, or the student's total resources still exceed his or her need by more than \$300, as recalculated, the institution must cancel any undisbursed loan or grant (other than a Federal Pell Grant).
 3. For the FSEOG and Federal Perkins Loan programs, if the student's total resources still exceed need by more than \$300 after the institution takes the steps required above; the institution must consider the amount by which the resources exceed the student's financial need by more than \$300 as an overpayment.
 4. An institution may choose to pay a student FWS funds over the student's need, until that student's cumulative earnings from all need-based employment occurring subsequent to the time his or her financial need has been met exceed \$300. If the institution wishes to continue the student's employment once the \$300 threshold has been reached, it must use funds other than FWS funds to pay the student.
 5. The amount over need earned from FWS, up to \$300, is not considered an overpayment in the current award year and should not be counted in the following award year, either as income in calculating the EFC or as a resource. An institution may not require a student to repay wages earned.

6. If the student earned more than \$300 over need when the institution becomes aware of the additional resources, and the required steps for resolving an over award do not eliminate the entire amount that was earned in excess of \$300, the amount over \$300 is not regarded as an over award since the student cannot be required to repay earnings. If the institution chooses to convert the excess over \$300 to funds other than FWS, the amount becomes non-need-based earnings and is treated as such on the following year's FAFSA, i.e., as income. (The institution has a choice in this matter only if it is itself not liable for the excess amount.)

506.4 Regulations concerning overpayments of Title IV funds changed on July 1, 2003.

- A. Students are not liable for Pell, FSEOG or Perkins Loan overpayments that result from institutional error or failure to follow regulations. Since they are not considered to owe a Title IV repayment under these circumstances, they do not lose Title IV eligibility. If the institution followed the required procedures and the Title IV overpayment \$25.00 or more, then the student must repay the overpayment. This rule does **not** apply to overpayments that are remaining balances or that result from application of the over award tolerance under the campus-based regulations.
 - B. Students are not required to repay overpayments for which they are liable as a result of their withdrawal if, at the time it occurs, the overpayment is less than \$51. This rule does **not** apply to overpayments that are remaining balances or that result from application of the over award tolerance under the campus-based regulations.
10. Institutional actions that are required when a student owes an overpayment have been standardized across the Federal Pell Grant, , FSEOG, and Federal Perkins Loan programs.

506.5 Prior to the regulatory revisions, students were always held accountable for any overpayment, regardless of the cause. Institutions were also liable for errors on their part, and had to restore the overpayment to the appropriate Title IV fund if the overpayment could not be otherwise corrected or collected from the student. An overpayment of a Pell Grant, for example, could be corrected by reducing subsequent payments in the same award year.

506.6 Under the new rules, students are no longer held liable for Pell, , FSEOG, or Perkins Loan overpayments caused by institutional error. An institution must immediately restore an overpayment for which it is liable to the appropriate program account. Thus, a Pell Grant, , FSEOG, or Perkins Loan overpayment may not be corrected by reducing subsequent disbursements if the overpayment is an institutional liability. Subsequent disbursements may be adjusted only to prevent an additional overpayment. For example, a school calculated a Pell Grant award of \$2,000 per term; after making the first disbursement, the school discovers that it erred in its calculation and should have awarded only \$1,500 per term. The school must immediately return \$500 to the Pell Grant Program and must reduce the second term award to the correct amount of \$1,500. Because the school is liable due to its error, it may **not** reduce the second term award to \$1,000 to make up the \$500 overpayment from the first term. If the source of the overpayment were, FSEOG or Perkins, the same principle applies.

506.7 An overpayment for which the institution is liable may not be considered a Title IV debt of the student's; it is, instead, a debt to the institution which the institution may then pursue with the student. Since the student is not considered to owe a Title IV overpayment, his or her eligibility for future Title IV aid is unaffected. Further, the amount that the student received in error from the institution (i.e., the amount the institution repaid on behalf of the student) is not considered a resource or financial aid, because the student owes this amount as a debt to the institution.

506.8 The student will owe a debt to the District and the Board Policy will be applied. Students who owe a debt to the District will have transcripts, registration, etc. withheld.

506.9 Causes of overpayments, and attendant liabilities:

- Institutional error, such as miscalculating the student's cost of attendance, taking the wrong amount from the Pell Grant payment or disbursement schedule, failing to check a transfer student's remaining eligibility within required timeframes, or otherwise failing to follow regulatory requirements: **institutional liability alone.**

- Student error, such as submitting incorrect information on the FAFSA: **student liability alone.**
- Student fails to begin attendance in all classes for which he or she was registered, thereby triggering required Pell Grant recalculation, **or** student drops classes, thereby triggering institution's optional policy to recalculate Pell Grant: **institutional liability alone.**
- Student selected for verification received a disbursement but then failed to submit required verification documentation within applicable deadline: **student liability alone** (668.60). *This liability can occur when the disbursement was made on an initially unselected application for which the institution had no conflicting information, but the student was subsequently selected for verification.*
- Institution properly made an interim disbursement to a student selected for verification, and the verified EFC results in a reduced award amount **or** *the student does not complete verification:* **joint student and institutional liability.** If the overpayment cannot be corrected by adjusting subsequent disbursements and the student does not repay, the institution must restore funds by the deadline given in Section 668.61(a).
- Institution fails to act to resolve conflicting information on an original or subsequent transaction: **institutional liability alone** for any disbursement made based on that new application.
- Institution disbursed funds prior to first day of classes and student never began attendance, or, regardless of when the funds were disbursed, the institution cannot document that the student attended any class: **institutional liability alone.**
- Student withdraws and the calculation governing the return of Title IV funds results in a Title IV grant overpayment owed by the student under \$51: **student liability alone.**

- 506.10 A student who owes an overpayment may regain Title IV eligibility by making satisfactory repayment arrangements (and maintaining the terms of the arrangement); this includes overpayments that result from the verification process. In the case of a student liability, the school may still adjust subsequent disbursements within the award or academic year to correct the overpayment. Note, however, that a Pell Grant may be reduced only to correct a Pell overpayment, as has always been true; a school may not reduce a subsequent Pell payment to correct an overpayment of any other type of aid.
- 506.11 An institution may still choose to pay an overpayment for which a student is liable. This action would turn a Title IV debt into a debt the student owes the institution, thereby restoring the student's Title IV eligibility.
- 506.12 A *student* does not owe an overpayment if the amount is less than \$25.00. This \$25 threshold does **not** apply to amounts that remain after a student has made some payments (i.e., is a remaining balance of a larger overpayment), does **not** apply to amounts remaining after applying the \$300 tolerance allowed under 673.5(d) of the campus-based program regulations, **nor** does it apply to repayment obligations as a result of withdrawal and R2T4 calculation (this tolerance is \$50). These *de minimus* standards do **not** apply to overpayments for which an institution is liable.
- 506.13 Under previous regulations applicable to Pell Grant overpayments for which an institution was *not* liable, the institution had to make a "reasonable effort to contact the student and recover the overpayment". The new Pell Grant regulations are more detailed, and conform to regulations already in place for FSEOG and Perkins Loan overpayments. Under the new regulations, the institution must promptly send a written notice to the student requesting repayment, and advising the student that failure to repay or to make satisfactory repayment arrangements will result in the student's ineligibility for additional Title IV aid. If the student objects that the overpayment determination is in error, the institution must consider the student's information and determine whether the overpayment determination is erroneous.
- 506.14 An institution must refer a Pell Grant, or FSEOG overpayment for which it is not liable to the Department of Education (ED) if the student neither repays nor makes satisfactory arrangements to repay it. Upon referral, responsibility for collection passes from the institution to ED. In addition to referral to ED, institutions must flag overpayments on NSLDS. Referral and reporting are two distinct processes.

507. AUTHORITY TO REFUSE FUNDING

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 507.1 No payment of funds may be made if the college determines that the student is in default on any federal debt or owes a repayment on any Title IV program received for attendance at any institution.
- 507.2 Students in default will be considered ineligible for Title IV funds until they have repaid their debt or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay the loan. Grossmont College considers this to be 6 timely consecutive monthly payments. The students must provide proof that they have met this minimum requirement with a letter from the Department of Education or the guarantee agency.
- Once the student submits documentation supporting six consecutive payments, the student may receive grant payments *for that semester only*. Direct Loan certification can be done for the full academic year. Documentation must be provided each year.
- 507.3 Payments may also be withheld if, in the advisor's judgment, the student has presented insufficient information to determine eligibility.
- 507.4 No payment of funds will be made if conflicting information is on file and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the financial aid advisor.
- 507.5 The following conditions will result in refusal to fund:
1. Student has exceeded the 150% quantitative Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) measure,
 2. Lack of progress due to Pace of Progression or the Qualitative SAP measure,
 3. Financial Aid Appeal/Petition disapproved,
 4. Incomplete application (not ready to process),
 5. Owes a refund on a Title IV grant or is in default on any federal debt and has not made satisfactory arrangements to repay (or consolidate, rehabilitate or discharge in the case of a loan),
 6. Completion of stated educational goal (e.g. Associates degree),
 7. Failure to register with Selective Service if required to do so,
 8. Unresolved database match rejects,
 9. Member of a Religious Order,
 10. Enrolled entirely in distance education (on-line) courses and not residing in California during the term in questions. Students must verify their place of residence with the Financial Aid Office before any disbursement may be made.
 11. Student flagged for Unusual Enrollment History (UEH) and appeal was denied.

508. VERIFICATION

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 508.1 Verification will begin at the time of application.
- 508.2 Because verification documents are requested as part of the application process, verification by itself will not be a reason for denial of aid. An application that is incomplete will be canceled whether or not it has been selected for verification. If a correction is required because of verification, the correction will be done electronically through Electronic Data Exchange.
- 508.3 Students who submit SAR's or have an ISIR on file that require correction may be given a 120-day extension to submit the SAR/ISIR for correction. If the process cannot be completed by the end of the payment period, payment will be made on the reprocessed SAR/ISIR only if it results in a decreased award. Otherwise, the original SAR/ISIR will be paid on.
- 508.4 Grossmont performs required verification on all students selected for verification.
- Students not selected for verification who meet institutionally defined criteria will be selected by the institution for verification. This may include unusually low income, taxes equal to AGI, taxes paid not within range based on AGI, etc. Financial Aid Advisors have the professional discretion to verify selected data elements or individual students on a case-by-case basis.

- 508.5 Grossmont College will recalculate eligibility for all students if verification reveals that an error has been made. Despite the allowable \$25.00 Verification Tolerance, **if the recalculation was a result of changes to the income, tax filing status, asset information and/or household size or number in college, the ISIR will be sent back to the Central Processing System (CPS) for correction - even if there was no change in the EFC.** Aid will not be awarded until a corrected EFC is returned from CPS. We will use the recalculated EFC from SAM for campus based aid eligibility determination.
- 508.6 Grossmont College Financial Aid staff is not expected to have special knowledge or expertise regarding the U.S. tax code. However, if someone whose data was required on the FAFSA submits a signed statement claiming non-filer status and the Advisor has reason to believe that person would have been required to file a U.S. tax return; this constitutes conflicting information and must be resolved.
- 508.7 If a person listed on Dependent Verification Worksheet is over the age of 23 and is being listed in the parent's household, they can be left in the parent's household **ONLY** if they were claimed on the parent's prior year tax return. If the person over the age of 23 (claimed by parents and included in the parent's household) is also in college, **DO NOT INCLUDE** this person in the number in college. The assumption being made that this student will benefit from financial aid as an Independent student at the institution they will be attending.

509. FRAUD

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

- 509.1 Institutions are required to refer applicants who may have engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with the financial aid application to the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Education, or, if more appropriate, to a State or local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate the matter. Referrals to local or state agencies must be reported by the institution on an annual basis to the Inspector General.
- 509.2 Suspected fraud should be reported to the hotline of the Department of Education Inspector General (1-800-MIS-USED) or the Long Beach Regional Office at (562) 980-4141. For more information, visit [Office of the Inspector General -- Misused](#).
- 509.3 Fraud *may* exist if the institution has reason to suspect:
1. falsified documents or forged signatures on the financial aid application itself or on documents submitted for verification of information on the application;
 2. use of false or fictitious names or aliases, addresses, or Social Security numbers, including deliberate use of multiple Social Security numbers;
 3. false claims of citizenship;
 4. a pattern of misreported information from one year to the next;
 5. false claims of independent status;
 6. false statements of income;
 7. stolen or fraudulently endorsed financial aid checks;
 8. embezzlement of financial aid checks or funds;
 9. kickbacks to receive grants, loans or employment under FWS; and/or
 10. unreported prior loans or grants, and receipt of concurrent full grants during one award year.

CHAPTER VI

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

601. UNIT LOAD

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

601.1 For financial aid purposes, a student's enrollment status will be determined on census day each semester if an award has already been made. Census day is defined as the third Monday of the semester. Census day for students awarded after the third Monday of the semester will be the day the student is awarded.

601.2 After census day, the student's award will generally not be revised. An exception may be made if institutional error can be documented. The following are examples of institutional errors:

- The instructor dropped the student in error on the drop roster and the instructor has supplied a typed written statement (or direct e-mail to a Financial Aid Advisor) stating
 - they dropped the student in error,
 - why the student was dropped in error and
 - the student has been in continual attendance for all class dates.
- The instructor must include their phone number and e-mail address in case the Financial Aid Advisor reviewing the case has additional questions. Verification with Admissions & Records that the student was dropped by the instructor may also be required.
- Admissions & Records failed to process an add card and it can be *documented* via typed written statement (or direct e-mail to a Financial Aid Advisor) that the add card was turned in before Census Day and there was sufficient time to process the add card prior to Census Day.

The following are **NOT** examples of institutional error:

- A course was cancelled due to insufficient enrollment or funding, regardless of whether a student was officially notified or not.
- The student didn't know about Census Day.
- The class was full and the instructor could not officially add the student before Census Day.
- The student turned in an Add Card after Census.
- The student thought they were enrolled when they actually were not.
- The student was dropped for lack of attendance and was then reinstated by the instructor after Census Day.
- The student accidentally dropped himself or herself via Web Advisor .
- The student was dropped from a course by Admissions & Records because they had registered for a repeated course (EITHER a course for which the student had already received a 'CR' or a grade of 'C' or better OR a course for which the student did not pass and is attempting for the third time) without petitioning Admissions & Records.
- The student did not officially enroll in 2nd eight-week courses before Census Day.

601.3 If an award is made after census day, the enrollment status will be based on the number of units in which the student is currently enrolled.

601.4 Verification of enrollment will be made prior to each disbursement.

601.5 If a student drops below 6 units after census day all aid may be cancelled except for Pell Grant and. If a student drops below 9 units after census day, EOPS/CARE (unless flagged by EOPS for 6 units) and SEOG will be cancelled.

601.6 **Consortium Agreement**

Units taken concurrently at Grossmont College and Cuyamaca College may be accepted for financial aid purposes if a student has filed a consortium agreement. Refer to Section 205 of this manual for specific requirements and deadlines.

602. SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

For Title IV financial aid eligibility, the U.S. Congress has mandated that institutions set Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements. Satisfactory progress is defined by the Department of Education as a normal length of time for a student to achieve an educational objective that cannot exceed 150% of the length of the student's academic program.

For Grossmont College, SAP standards are evaluated by measuring the maximum time frame and pace of progression a student takes to complete their degree objective (Quantitative Standard) and a student's GPA (Qualitative Standard). These standards are evaluated at the time of application for federal financial aid funds for new applicants and at the end of each enrollment period (Fall, Spring and/or Summer) for continuing applicants. SAP standards apply to all students regardless of previous financial aid history.

Financial aid eligibility requires students to declare a major in an eligible program, whether that is for an Associate Degree (AA), Certificate of Achievement (CA), or a Transfer Program. Students are expected to:

- Meet with an academic counselor to create an educational plan which outlines the courses they have completed and are required to complete to achieve their educational goal at Grossmont College.
- Use their educational plan, class schedule, college catalog and other college publications to help them complete their declared program of study.
- Enroll ONLY in courses required for their program to ensure meeting SAP requirements.

602.1 **Unit Maximum**

- A. Since most Grossmont College Associate degree programs and GE Transfer programs are approximately 60 units, students will be expected to complete their educational objective by the time they have completed 71 units and/or attempted 90 units, whichever comes first (60 units times 150% equals 90 units attempted maximum). This includes change of majors and degree objectives. Students will be expected to complete their educational objective for a *Certificate* by the time they have completed 36 units and/or attempted 45 units, whichever comes first.
- B. Students who are in majors that require more than 71 units for an Associate's Degree or for transfer may be approved up to the 150% overall attempted units on a case-by-case basis through the Financial Aid Appeal process. Extenuating cases for consideration beyond the 150% must be reviewed by the Financial Aid Director.
- C. Students enrolled in terminal programs that have academic requirements for admission to the program; high unit major, or need prep for major to transfer and who have attempted less than the 150% of the academic program units may be funded on a case-by-case basis through the Financial Aid Appeal process. Students approved under these conditions must remain with that program and make satisfactory progress.
- D. Students may be funded to a maximum of 35 units of ESL. The maximum number of units to be funded will be determined by the student's CELSA score and/or Ed Plan. ESL courses that are degree applicable or transferable may be excluded from the ESL unit limit and count as regular units.
- E. Students may be funded to a maximum of 30 units of remediation if documented by assessment scores and/or an academic counselor.

602.2 **Previous Coursework from Other Institutions**

- A. All units transferable to Grossmont College from other institutions will be counted toward the 150% units attempted maximum.
- B. Official academic transcripts from all colleges attended (including foreign institutions where Title IV aid was received) should be submitted to the Admissions & Records Office for calculation of advanced standing.

C. Students transferring to Grossmont College with at least 12 units attempted and with an overall G.P.A. less than 2.0 will be subject to the Financial Aid Appeal process.

D. Academic transcripts are required for students flagged by NSLDS for Unusual Enrollment History (UEH).

602.3 Satisfactory Progress

A. Students must complete 79% of the units attempted per semester to ensure an acceptable Pace of Progression. Pace of Progression is calculated by dividing the number of units completed by the number of overall units attempted to calculate the student's completion rate. Example: a student has 65 units completed and 80 overall units attempted. By dividing 65 units completed by 80 units attempted the result is an 81% completion rate.

1. Full-time students must complete 9 units each semester.
2. Three-quarter-time students must complete 7 units each semester.
3. Half-time students must complete 5 units each semester.
4. Less than half-time students must complete .5 units.

B. Students must maintain a minimum semester GPA of 2.0. Also, students enrolled in an Associate degree or Transfer program must have an overall 2.0 GPA after two years. The Department of Education has defined two academic years as the equivalent of four terms, regardless of enrollment status.

1. Treatment of Qualitative Measure for Passed (P)/Not Passed (NP) coursework – for students enrolled in both P/NP courses and courses for which they would receive a grade, the term GPA will be calculated solely based upon the courses in which the student receives a grade. For students enrolled entirely in P/NP courses, a qualitative measure will be evaluated based upon the student's successful completion (Pass) of a majority of their attempted units **and** a majority of their courses for the term.

C. Review Policy – General

Units not completed (F's, Withdrawals, Incompletes and NP's) are added to the total number of units completed to calculate the overall number of units a student has attempted to ensure that the student does not exceed the 150% unit maximum.

1. The following will be considered as units completed:
 - a. "A" through "D" grades.
 - b. "P" ('Passed').
2. The following will be considered as units not completed:
 - a. "F" grades.
 - b. "W" (withdrawal).
 - c. "I" (incomplete).
 - d. "NP" ('Not Passed').
3. All repeated courses count toward the 150% unit maximum, including semesters for which

Academic Renewal may have been applied by Admissions and Records at Grossmont or Cuyamaca College.

D. Review Policy - Not on Aid

1. The units attempted will be compared to the units completed. If the student's units attempted exceeds 19 and/or if the student's overall GPA is below 2.0 after attempting 12 or more units, the student will be subject to the Financial Aid Appeal process. New applicants who are not meeting SAP standards are not eligible for Financial Aid Warning consideration.

E. Review Policy - On Aid

1. SAP Evaluation

- Following each semester, the GPA and the number of units completed will be evaluated based upon the 'SAP Pace of Progression' standards above.

2. Financial Aid Warning

- Students who are paid for a term and do not meet SAP standards can be placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next semester. However, if a student is currently on Warning or Probation status, they are not eligible to be placed on Warning again for a consecutive term. In addition, if the student has completed the four or more terms and their overall GPA is below a 2.0, they are not eligible for Warning status.

- Students placed on Warning status are eligible for financial aid for the Warning term and must make SAP for that term in order to maintain their financial aid eligibility.

- Students will be notified in writing that they have been placed on Warning status and they will not be required to submit a Financial Aid petition or Appeal for the Warning term. A student placed on Financial Aid Warning who does not make SAP again for the Warning term will be disqualified the following term and will be subject to the Financial Aid Appeal process.

3. Financial Aid Disqualification

- All students who do not make SAP (excluding students who meet the Financial Aid Warning standards detailed above) will be disqualified from receiving financial aid.

- Student's who choose not to go through the Financial Aid Appeals process or who do not make SAP while on Financial Aid Probation will be disqualified and will not regain eligibility for Title IV aid at Grossmont College until they meet the reinstatement conditions outlined below.

4. Financial Aid Probation

- Students who were disqualified for not meeting Financial Aid SAP standards have the option to submit a petition through the Financial Aid Appeal process. Students who are approved through the Appeals process will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and are eligible for financial aid.

- Students on Financial Aid Probation must make SAP according to Section 602.3 A & B above and may also need to meet the conditions set by their Financial Aid Advisor or the Appeals Committee to maintain financial aid eligibility.

5. Students may make up deficient units in the Summer. However, students who are subject to disqualification going into Summer will be required to submit a petition for reinstatement for the subsequent term. If a student receives financial aid in the summer session, they will be held to the SAP standards outlined in 'Review Policy – On Aid' above.

603. REINSTATEMENT

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

603.1 Reinstatement is not an automatic process and is not guaranteed. Students may attempt to regain eligibility for financial aid after disqualification and/or denial of petition for lack of progress by:

- A. Enrolling in a minimum of six (6) units and completing a semester of SAP according to the standards outlined in 'SAP Pace of Progression' above, and
- B. Meeting with an Academic Counselor to complete a semester Educational Plan. Students must submit their Financial Aid Probation Education Plan with their petition form, and
- C. Complying with any other specific conditions that were set in the Appeal decision made by the Financial Aid Advisor or the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

604. PETITIONS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

604.1 Students may petition for reinstatement or continuation of aid.

- A. All students with 71 units completed or 90 units attempted (or 36 units completed or 45 units attempted for Certificate students) must petition for initial or continued eligibility.
- B. Students who must petition for lack of progress/pace of progression are not eligible for retroactive awards for a prior term if the petition is approved. Petitions for lack of progress/pace of progression must be submitted by the last day of the term for which the student is applying. Students who petition only because they have completed more than the unit maximums may be eligible for a retroactive award because they may need additional units to complete their objective and they have made satisfactory progress for that retroactive term.
- C. Petitions will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Advisor and/or the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.
- D. Students will receive written notification of the decision.

Processing Petitions

The Financial Aid Advisor may act on all petitions.

- E. Petitions will be considered based upon:
 1. Documented extenuating personal difficulty (i.e. recent disability, job layoff, severe illness or injury, death of a family member or other extenuating circumstances), which may be the basis for approval with consideration given to: supporting documentation, detailed explanation from the student or independent third party, current progress reports, and the student's overall academic record. The following reasons are not considered extenuating personal difficulties:
 - Course was too difficult
 - Attempted too many units and couldn't handle the workload
 - Transportation issues
 - Lack of time management
 - Financial Aid processing late or delayed
 - Had to work too many hours
 2. Minimally, all petitions must include:
 - Why the student failed to meet SAP standards, and
 - What the student has changed/corrected to ensure lack of progress won't happen in the future, and
 - Documentation to support the petition. Documentation may be in the form of detailed supportive statements if no other documentation is available.
 3. In extenuating or unusual cases, where it is deemed that the individual circumstances are outside the normal application of policy, the Advisor should consult with the Financial Aid Appeals Committee for possible resolution (including the possible application of Professional Judgment).

4. In reviewing petitions where pace of progression is an issue, it may be possible to deduct units attempted if the student has provided detailed reasons for the deficiencies and has also provided documentation for the extenuating circumstances.

It may also be possible to take into consideration, on a case-by-case basis, any elective or non-degree applicable coursework the student has completed as long as they have not exceeded the 150% and the combination of the unit deficiencies and elective/non-degree applicable coursework does not exceed 19 units.

5. In reviewing Unit maximum petitions, the following may be basis for approval:

- a) Serious medical or personal difficulty - documentation required.
- b) Enrollment as a retraining student. The term "retraining student" denotes a student who:
 - 1) Can no longer pursue employment in previous occupation due to circumstances beyond his/her control; or
 - 2) Is a Displaced Homemaker who:
 - i. has worked primarily without remuneration to care for a home and family and, for that reason, has diminished marketable skills; and
 - ii. has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by such income; or
 - iii. has been dependent on public assistance or has been receiving public assistance because of dependent children in the home; and
 - iv. is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
- c) Must present a well-defined course of study.
- d) Approval will be for the course of study.
- e) Up to 30 units of remedial coursework may be excluded from unit maximum if documented by assessment scores and/or academic counselor. Remedial units in excess of 30 units cannot be funded with Title IV aid.

English: 51 ABCD, 52 ABCD, 90, 90R, 95, 96, 97, 98, 98R, 101, 103*, 104*

Math: 70, 80, 80T*, 85*, 87, 88, 88L, 89, 90, 90L, 90T*, 97

Speech Development (SPDV): 101, 102, 103, 104, 108, 109

Personal Development (PDSS): 80, 85A-B, 087, 87A-B, 90A-D, 94A-D, 101, 104A-B*, 110, 111

* No longer offered but may be on student's older transcripts

f) The following courses are degree applicable but do not transfer:

English: 105, 106, 107

Math: 103, 110, 110T, 160L

ESL: 100, 101, 102, 104, 105

g) Units needed for major - up to 150% attempted for the academic program. Approvals are on a case-by-case basis. Criteria to be considered include overall track record and whether student is in a high unit major.

h) Units needed to transfer - up to 150% attempted for the academic program. Approvals are on a case-by-case basis. Criteria to be considered include overall track record, whether student is transferring into a high unit major and if prep for major is required to enter transfer institution.

i) Enrollment in a *special admission* Health Science program that also has an internship as part of its requirements. Criteria to be considered include total number of units, degree objective, financial hardship, prior health science degree.

ESL coursework may be funded to a maximum of 35 units. ESL courses will be in addition to the established unit maximum stated above. Students who take ESL courses below the recommended placement level, per their assessment scores, will not have those courses considered as part of the 35 units and will be counted against the unit maximum. ESL courses that are transferable or degree applicable will be counted against the unit maximum.

604.6 Appeal Process

A. Students wishing to appeal the denial of their financial aid petition must submit an Appeal form with documentation of extenuating circumstances not already presented with the petition (Progress Reports from all classes enrolled are also required after the 7th week of the semester). The appeal will be reviewed by a committee consisting of Financial Aid Advisors, an Academic Counselor, the Financial Aid Supervisor and/or the Director of Financial Aid.

B. Students may appeal to the Dean, Admissions & Records and Financial Aid after the student has exhausted all remedies including seeing the Director of Financial Aid. Students must provide compelling information regarding the College, District, State and/or Federal regulations or policies that were misinterpreted or wrongly applied by the committee to the Dean. If no resolution is found to the satisfaction of the student, they may then meet with the Vice President of Student Services.

FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS AND REGULATIONS

701. FEDERAL STUDENT AID[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

The majority of the student aid available to Grossmont students comes from federally funded programs. Major federal programs are Federal Pell Grant (PELL), Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), and the Federal Direct Loan Program.

The aid administrator should first recognize that all federal programs are interrelated. The purpose of Pell is to provide needy students with a "foundation" of financial support to help defray educational costs. FSEOG is to assist those students who, without this supplemental source of assistance, could not afford to pay the costs of post-secondary education. The purpose of FWS is to stimulate and promote part-time employment of students with financial need to help them meet their educational expenses without incurring unduly heavy burdens of loan indebtedness. A secondary purpose of FWS is to broaden the range of worthwhile part-time job opportunities and educational experiences available to students. The purpose of Federal Direct Loan program is to assist in the establishment and maintenance of long-term, deferred loans to needy students to meet their remaining financial need.

701.1 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- A. All federal programs have some common eligibility requirements:
1. Enrollment in a degree, certificate, or other program leading to a recognized educational credential. (An education goal of A - E on the Admissions application)
 2. Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in the course of study the student is pursuing.
 3. Does not owe a refund on any Title IV grants previously received at any institution and is not in default on any federal debt.
 4. Citizen or national of the United States, a permanent resident of the United States, or an eligible non-citizen.
 5. Registered for Selective Service if required to do so.
 6. Students enrolling for the first time after July 1, 2012 must have a High School Diploma, GED or state recognized equivalent to be eligible for federal financial aid. New students will no longer have the option to pass an Ability to Benefit (ATB) test or to successfully complete 6 degree applicable units to gain eligibility for federal financial aid. A student who does not possess a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, but who was enrolled in an eligible program any time prior to July 1, 2012, may be eligible to receive federal student aid under the prior ATB provision.
 7. Demonstrate financial need.
 8. Has not exceeded undergraduate aggregate loan borrower limits.
 9. Does not have a Bachelor's degree or foreign equivalent.
 10. Not a member of a religious order.
 11. Students who are only enrolled in distance education (on-line) courses must reside in California during that semester to be eligible for federal financial aid. Students must verify their place of residence with the Financial Aid Office.
 12. If a student is flagged for "Unusual Enrollment History (UEH)" after completing the FAFSA, the student will be required to complete a 2015-2016 Unusual Enrollment History Appeal form. The appeal will be reviewed. If approved, no further action is necessary. If it is denied, the student will not be eligible

for federal student aid, but will be provided with information on how he or she may regain eligibility for federal aid.

B. Administrative Standards

Grossmont adheres to the requirements provided in the authorizing statutes and the applicable program regulations under [Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965](#) and its amendments.

C. Institutional Responsibilities

Each participating institution is responsible for the ongoing operation of the programs on its own campus. It is the financial aid administrator's duty to ensure that eligible students receive the proceeds of these programs in accordance with the provisions of the law, the Agreement signed by the Secretary of Education and the institution's chief administrative officer, and other criteria as may be established by the Secretary. The financial aid administrator must accomplish the above with sensitivity to the overall mission of the institution.

Additional general responsibilities include: submission of applications for federal funds and fiscal operations reports to the Department of Education; adequate dissemination of accurate information relative to types of aid programs, comprehensive educational costs (direct and indirect), and application procedures for individual students; evaluation of student application procedures for individual students; evaluation of student applications and determination of need; packaging of aid to meet each student's need to the extent possible; notification to all applicants of action taken on their applications; counseling of students regarding financial aid matters; disbursement of funds to recipients; revision of aid packages to respond to unanticipated situations; and maintenance of adequate records.

D. Audits and Program Reviews

1. An annual self-audit of financial aid operations should be performed by the Financial Aid Office personnel.
2. An independent annual audit of aid programs will be done according to standards set by the Education Department's Inspector General (refer to the Education Department Audit Guide and the Accounting and Record keeping Manual).
3. Periodic program reviews are conducted by program officers from the Region IX Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) to determine administrative or procedural weaknesses in implementation of federal regulations. If serious deficiencies exist, a formal audit may be requested by the Department of Education. Restitution of incorrectly awarded funds may be required and future federal funding may be jeopardized.
4. Periodic program reviews are also conducted by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) on federal and state regulatory compliance.

E. Grossmont policies unique to each program are discussed below.

701.2 Federal Pell Grant

A. Eligible Students

1. Student must not have earned a bachelor's degree. Refer to World of Education Series for equivalency of foreign degrees. (Alliant International University: 858-635-4772)
2. Students may have their coursework evaluated through: International

Education Research Foundation (IERF)
P.O. Box 3665
Culver City, CA 90231-3665
(310) 258-9451 or FAX (310) 342-7086
www.ierf.org

Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc. (ACEI) P.O.
Box 6908

3. The Federal Pell Grant is available for undergraduate study until students have received the equivalent of twelve full-time semesters of Pell Grant. The 12 semester (or 600%) limit pertains to any Pell received during the lifetime of the student.
4. All undergraduate students who apply for campus-based aid must apply for a Federal Pell Grant.

B. Deadlines: dates to apply, to submit corrections to the processor, and to submit a SAR to the Financial Aid Office are established annually by the federal government. The deadline dates for submission of complete applications will be as follows:

1. For students not enrolled in Summer school, the deadline to complete a file with the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office is 5 business days after last day of the semester.
2. For students enrolled in Summer school, the deadline to complete a file for 15-16 with the Grossmont College Financial Aid Office is August 15, 2016.
3. A student whose application is being verified may be given up to 180 days after his or her last day of enrollment if the SAR was submitted during the period of enrollment and requires corrections that result in a higher EFC. The student must be paid on the higher EFC in this circumstance. However, the 180 day extension cannot continue beyond August 15th.
4. Students must be enrolled in either the Summer or Spring semester to receive retroactive awards for the Fall semester if the application is completed more than 5 business days after the end of the Fall semester.

C. Summer Award

1. To be eligible for a summer Pell award, a student must have made Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or met the *Warning* standard as of the end of the Spring semester. Students may regain eligibility for summer through the petition process. Students do not have to be enrolled in Fall or Spring to get Summer Pell.
2. Student must also have remaining eligibility for summer, not having exceeded 100% Pell for the Fall and Spring terms.
3. Summer Pell is calculated using Formula 1 methodology.

D. Enrollment in Eight-week sessions.

Grossmont considers an 8-week session to be a short nonstandard term within a standard term. That is, the semester contains within it opportunities for the student to take additional credits on an accelerated basis.

E. Federal Pell Grant Cost of Attendance Figures

Please refer to Section 301.7 for details on Pell estimated Cost of Attendance (COA).

F. Out-of-State Tuition

Deferment of Out-of-State Tuition: it will be the policy of the Financial Aid Office to send a memo regarding deferment of out-of-state tuition per term to the Cashier's Office indicating a student's preliminary eligibility for Federal Pell Grant only. This memo may be sent if a valid SAR/ISIR is on file (a valid SAR/ISIR exists when an EFC has been calculated). It will not be necessary to verify information on the SAR/ISIR before determining a preliminary Federal Pell Grant amount. The award amount should be for one semester as a full-time student (12 units).

A 24-hour turn-around time will be allowed to process deferment memos.

G. Retroactive Awards

Students who must petition for lack of progress or pace are not eligible for a retroactive award. Petitions approved prior to the end of the term, but not awarded until after the term, may have the prior semesters aid awarded. Retroactive awards are based on units completed. Units completed include "F" or "NC" grades. It does not include "W" or "I's". **Students who *only* petition for unit maximum review are eligible for a retroactive award.**

Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive Pell Grant for the term in which the default was resolved. Pell Grant may not be paid to a prior term in which the student was in default unless the default was resolved in that prior term.

701.3 Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

A. Maximum and Minimum Academic Year Award

Maximum award at Grossmont per academic year generally is \$1000. Exceptions may be considered. The federal maximum FSEOG award is \$4,000 per year with no cumulative maximum.

Minimum FSEOG award is \$100 per academic year.

B. Eligible Students

1. A student must have "exceptional need", which is defined as the lowest EFC.
2. First priority for FSEOG will go to full time students living away from home. Students with EFC's of zero will receive the largest awards (\$1000) and awards will decrease by \$100 as the EFC increases to the next cell on the Pell Grant payment chart.
3. Students living at home who have a zero EFC will be eligible for a \$500 SEOG award.
4. Student must not have earned a bachelor's degree.
5. Student will be ineligible for SEOG funds if they drop below 9 units. SEOG funds will not be disbursed during the term in which the student falls to below 9 units. The award will not be canceled for the Spring term if the student drops to below 9 units in the Fall term.

C. Retroactive Awards

1. Students who must petition for lack of progress or pace are not eligible for a retroactive award.
2. Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive SEOG for the term in which the default was resolved. SEOG may not be paid to a prior term in which the student was in default unless the default was resolved in that prior term.

D. Summer Awards

1. For independent or dependent students, construct a two-month summer budget and count all resources. Award aid on basis of need. To determine summer budget, take the nine-month budget figure, divide by 9 and multiply by 2.
2. If summer awards are disbursed before July 1, they will reflect a need analysis based on the recently completed academic year application. Summer awards disbursed after June 30 will reflect

a need analysis based on the coming academic year application. Therefore, renewal students will be the only ones to qualify for a disbursement before July 1.

701.4 Federal College Work-Study Program (CWS)

A. Eligible Students

1. Grossmont may, at its discretion, use up to 10% of the FWS allocation for less than half-time students.
2. Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive CWS for the term in which the default was resolved. CWS may not be paid for a prior term in which the student was in default unless the default was resolved in that prior term.
3. Students who drop to below 6 units will have their CWS cancelled.

B. Special Provisions

1. Student workers may not be used to replace regular employees. Conditions of employment must be appropriate in light of geographical region, student proficiency, and type of work performed. Work must not involve construction, operation or maintenance of a facility used for sectarian purposes, nor be involved in political activity. Students may work up to 8 hours per day/40 hours per week. Normally, students would work up to 15 hours per week based on the prevailing wage rate and the maximum award amount for the academic year. Unless limited by funding, there is nothing to not earn more than the award amount. No overtime allowed.

C. Disbursement of Funds

1. Check disbursements are made on the 5th of each month (see [Section 504.2](#)).
2. The institution is responsible for making certain that students receive all wages to which entitled.
3. Students who earn in excess of \$300 of their FWS award cannot be paid from FWS funds. The Department for whom the student works will be responsible for reimbursement of funds to the FWS program.

D. Summer Awards

1. Students enrolled in at least 3 units may have FWS awarded based on need for the summer.
2. Student must either have attended at least half-time at Grossmont during Spring or have been accepted for enrollment at least half-time during Fall.
3. Students who work during the summer will be earning Fall/Spring eligibility if they are not enrolled in at least 3 units in summer school.
4. For continuing FWS students who have earned all their Fall/Spring FWS eligibility, Summer FWS will run from the beginning of Summer school to August 14.
5. For first-time FWS students, Summer FWS will run from July 1 to August 14.
6. Students receiving Summer FWS must be cleared to enroll for the following Fall semester. This may be verified on the computer using the Student Data Lookup program.
7. Students who work in June can have their FWS applied against the previous award year or into the next award year.

E. Maximum Hours

1. While attending classes, students generally work a maximum average of 20 hours per week.

2. During non-class sessions (holidays, summer, semester break), students may work a maximum of 40 hours per week/8 hours per day.

F. Forfeiture of Eligibility

1. If a student refuses two assignments, is not hired after three referrals by a position supervisor, is terminated twice for cause, or fails to report to the Federal Work-Study coordinator within three weeks of a financial aid award, the student may forfeit the work-study eligibility.
2. After being refused employment two times, the student may be referred back to a financial aid advisor for counseling and further review of the award.

G. Wages

1. Wage rates are established according to the District pay rate schedule.
2. The California Community College's Chancellor's Office issued Legal Opinion 99-08 regarding minimum wage as it relates to state minimum wage and federal minimum wage. "Employers in California are generally required to pay employees the state minimum wage. An exception is provided for "employees directly employed by the State or any county, incorporated city or town or other municipal corporation, or to outside salespersons." Community college districts are "municipal corporations" for purposes of application of the state minimum wage laws and fall within the exception. As a result, they are not required to pay the state minimum wage to federal or CalWorks work study."

H. Terminations

The following are procedures to be used when a student requests termination of FWS job assignment and does not wish to be reassigned.

1. The Financial Aid Assistant, Sr. must send a Job Assignment Termination Notice to the Department, the Supervisor, and Personnel.
2. The FWS award is canceled and funds may be made available to other needy students.

701.5 Federal Direct Loan Program (formerly known as Stafford Student Loan)

A. Purpose

Federal Direct Loans are made to students and guaranteed by the U.S. government to further assist needy students.

B. Maximum and Minimum Academic Year Award

1st year undergraduates	\$3,500/year	(0 to 29.9 units completed)
2nd year undergraduates	\$4,500/year	(30 plus units completed)

1. Grossmont College does not participate in the PLUS loan program.
2. While Unsubsidized loans are not generally encouraged for students at Grossmont College, these loans are processed at the students request.
3. Subsidized loan amounts cannot be greater than student's total educational costs less any financial aid received less family contribution.
4. Students approved for one semester only of financial aid, are only eligible for one half the maximum annual loan amount.

5. Students who's academic status changes from grade level one (0 – 29.9 units) to grade level two (30 or more units) during the academic year will be eligible for grade level two loan amounts to a maximum of \$500 for the spring semester.
6. The HEA of 1998 allows for the adjustment in loan amounts based on professional judgment. On a case-by-case basis, an eligible institution may refuse to certify a loan amount or make a loan that is less than the student's determination of need (as determined under this part), if the reason for the action is documented and provided in written form to the student. No eligible institution shall discriminate against any borrower or applicant in obtaining a loan on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age, or disability status.

C. Time Limitation on Direct Subsidized Loans

1. For first time borrowers on or after July 01, 2013, there is a limit on the maximum period of time (measured in academic years) that you can receive Direct Subsidized Loans. In general, you may not receive Direct Subsidized Loans for more than 150% of the published length of your program. This is called a student's "maximum eligibility period". Students can usually find the published length of any program of study in the Grossmont College catalog.
 - a. For example, if students are enrolled in a 2-year associate degree program, the maximum period for which they can receive Direct Subsidized Loans is 3 years (150% of 2 years = 3 years). For a one year certificate program, that maximum period is 1.5 years.
2. The maximum eligibility period is based on the published length of the current academic program. This means that the maximum eligibility period can change if a student changes programs. Furthermore, if a student receives Direct Subsidized Loans for one program and then changes to another program, the Direct Subsidized Loans they received for the earlier program will generally count against their new maximum eligibility period.

D. Maximum Cumulative Award

Dependent Undergraduates	\$31,000 (sub and unsub w/ sub limited to \$23,000)
Independent Undergraduates	\$57,500 (sub and unsub w/ sub limited to \$23,000)
Graduate or Professional	\$138,500 (no more than \$65,500 in subsidized Stafford)

E. Eligible Students

1. Must be enrolled on at least a half-time basis.
2. All students must demonstrate need in order to receive a subsidized Federal Direct Loan. Need is determined by standard student expense budget less student financial assistance and the Expected Family Contribution (EFC).
3. At the time of certification, borrowers will be subject to satisfactory progress requirements.
4. Students who have defaulted on a loan and resolve the defaulted loan may receive a Direct Loan for the academic year in which the default was resolved. This is different from eligibility for Pell and campus based aid that only allows payment for the period in which the student regained eligibility.
5. All students must pass an Entrance and an Exit Interview. Students will only be required to do an Entrance Interview when they apply for their first loan. Exit Interviews will be required every academic year.
6. Students who appear to have their financial need met who are also receiving need- based aid (i.e. SEOG, Cal Grant, College Work-study, etc.) may be encouraged to go through additional loan counseling.

F. Disbursements

1. Direct Loans are disbursed by the District Accounting Office in the form of a mailed check or EFT.
2. First time borrowers will have scheduled disbursements 30 days after the beginning of the semester. Retroactive payments are not subject to the 30-day disbursement delay.
3. Break in eligibility - if a student temporarily dropped below half-time and has resumed enrollment on at least a half-time basis, the school may deliver loan proceeds if the school determines and documents:
 - a. The student has resumed at least half-time enrollment,
 - b. The revised cost of attendance for the portion of the loan period that the student was or will be enrolled at least half-time, and
 - c. That based on the revisions, the student continues to be eligible for the entire amount of the loan.
4. Bankruptcy - If the school is notified by the lender of a bankruptcy action and is instructed to return any Title IV loan funds that have not been released to the borrower, the school must immediately return any undelivered funds to the lender. In addition, if the school receives notification that a Stafford or PLUS borrower has filed a bankruptcy action after the school certified the loan but before the funds have been delivered to the borrower, the school should return any undelivered funds. The school must include an explanation that the funds are being returned because the borrower has filed for bankruptcy and must attach a copy of any documentation it possesses regarding the bankruptcy.
5. Disbursements made to a student in a study abroad program that is approved by the student's home institution may be at the student's request and disbursed by check or other means directly to the student only after the student's enrollment is verified. The student may authorize a power of attorney to endorse the check or authorize an electronic funds transfer.

G. Late Disbursements

- a. A disbursement is late if it is received after –
 - 1) The end of the loan period, or
 - 2) Before the end of the loan period but after the student ceased to be enrolled on at least a half-time basis.
- b. A student who completes his/her program before being paid *must* be considered for a late disbursement of a Direct Loan if:
 - the loan was originated before the date the student became ineligible, and
 - an ISIR with an official EFC was processed before the student became ineligible (check the “process date” on the earliest ISIR for the school year, keeping in mind that the school may not have received the student's earliest ISIR if it was not listed).

Similarly, a student who withdraws from school before being paid a first disbursement must be considered for a late disbursement, subject to the two conditions listed above. (However, late disbursements for subsequent payment periods may not be made to students who withdraw *after* receiving a first disbursement).
- c. School must determine that the total amount of prior disbursements and late disbursement do not exceed student's documented expenses for the portion of the loan period completed on at least a half-time basis. School is also required to contact the borrower in cases where the borrower is eligible for a late disbursement or post-withdrawal disbursement to confirm whether the loan funds are still needed.
- d. School may not:
 - Deliver a late first disbursement if student is subject to delayed delivery and student's last recorded date of attendance is earlier than the 30th day of the loan period.
 - Deliver a late second or subsequent disbursement unless the student graduated or completed the loan period.
 - Deliver any portion of the loan considered awarded for a payment period that the student was not enrolled on a least a half-time basis.

- Deliver a late disbursement if it is received more than 60 days after the earlier of the above dates.
- Deliver proceeds for which student does not qualify after a school's determination of adjusted costs and financial need.

701.6 Federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

- A. Grossmont does not participate in the PLUS program.

701.7 Alternative Loans

- A. Grossmont College will not process Alternative Loans in excess of the student's cost of education and/or the student's financial need, regardless of the EFC.
- B. Grossmont College does not certify Alternative Loans during the summer sessions. C.

Alternative loans will not be certified for students with federal or state grant eligibility.

702. STATE STUDENT AID

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

The State of California supports several different financial aid programs for its residents. Two state agencies, which are principally responsible for the administration of the major state aid programs available to community college students, are the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). The programs administered and regulated by these agencies are described below.

702.1 Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)/CARE

- A. To be eligible for the Extended Opportunity Program and Services, students must meet the requirements set forth in Title 5, Division 6, Chapter 7, Article 2 of the [California Code of Regulations](#).

To receive services, other than direct aid (EOPS grants, CARE, loans and work-study monies), students must meet each of the requirements listed under Section 56220. Eligibility for EOPS financial aid (as distinguished from other sources of college financial assistance) is defined within Section 56224. Eligible students may continue to receive EOPS services and/or direct financial aid as long as they meet the eligibility requirements and/or limitations specified in Sections 56222, 56226 and 56228.

- B. To be eligible for EOPS/CARE, a student must:

1. Be a California resident or eligible under AB-540 or AB-1899.
2. Be enrolled as a full-time student (12 units or more per term, with the exceptions as noted in Section 56220 of Title 5).
3. Have fewer than 70 units of degree applicable college credits.
4. Qualify to receive a Board of Governors Waiver under either Method A, B or C. Professional judgment regarding dependency will be accepted for EOPS purposes.
5. Be educationally disadvantaged.
6. CARE has additional eligibility requirements in addition to the above.

(Reference: Section 56220)

- C. A student is educationally disadvantaged if:

1. He or she did not graduate from high school or obtain the General Education Diploma (GED) or Certificate of Proficiency.
2. He or she graduated from high school with a grade point average below 2.50.
3. He or she does not qualify for the minimum level mathematics or English coursework required for an associate degree at the college of enrollment.
4. He or she was previously enrolled in remedial education courses.
5. Other considerations deemed relevant by the Director, in accordance with the approved Program Plan.

NOTE: Only the following three (3) criteria have been approved to date by the Chancellor's Office for use under #5 above:

- a. The student is a first generation college student
- b. The student is a member of an under-represented group residing in the immediate service area, which has been targeted by EOPS for outreach and recruitment
- c. The student's parents are not native English speakers

In determining educationally disadvantaged eligibility for EOPS/CARE, directors must first exhaust numbers 1-4 above, prior to applying any criteria under #5. Number 5 should be used ONLY in exceptional cases and will be considered the program's "special admit" criteria. Documentation will be required verifying that these procedures take place.

(Reference: Section 56220)

D. There are two different ways an EOPS student may be determined eligible using Board of Governors Waiver (BOGW) criteria:

Method A. A student is eligible if, at the time of enrollment, he or she is: (1) A recipient of benefits under TANF; OR

- (2) A recipient of benefits under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program; OR
- (3) A recipient of benefits under the General Assistance program; OR Documentation verifying receipt of benefits must be provided, as required by the college.

Method B. A student is eligible if the student meets the **BOG 2014 income standards**. Documentation of taxable and/or untaxed income must be provided, as required by the Financial Aid Office.

NOTE: Students who qualify to receive a BOGW under Method C may be reviewed for EOPS eligibility and re-qualified under either Method A or B if they meet the criteria outlined above.

E. Eligibility - ZERO EFC

A student with a Zero EFC, as determined by the Financial Aid Office, is EOPS eligible. [Reference: Section 5620, and 58620(1) or (2)]

F. To receive EOPS/CARE financial aid a student must:

1. Be eligible for and receive services pursuant to Sections 56220 and 56222 of Title 5; AND

2. Demonstrate financial need; AND
3. Have need for EOPS/CARE financial aid in accordance with Sections 56252 and 56254 of Title 5.

-Section 56252: AFTER A STUDENT IS FULLY PACKAGED, EOPS/CARE monies (grants and work-study) may be awarded to a) reduce loan indebtedness; or b) to reduce unmet financial need.

-Section 56254: Grants may be awarded, not to exceed \$900 per academic year (or the amount of a student's unmet need, whichever is less); work-study may be awarded, not to exceed \$1,800 per academic year (or the amount of a student's unmet need, whichever is less); no combination of grants and work-study may exceed \$1,800 per academic year.

(Reference: Section 56224)

G. Limitations on Eligibility

A student meeting the eligibility criteria outlined in Sections 56220 and 56222, and who participates without term-to-term interruption shall continue to be eligible until:

1. The student has completed 70 or more degree applicable units (not including units for remedial coursework); OR
2. The student has completed consecutively 6 semester terms or 9 quarter terms; OR
3. The student has failed to meet the terms, conditions, and follow-up provisions of the educational plan and/or mutual responsibility contract.

NOTE: Students continue to be eligible for EOPS/CARE under the above conditions for services only; to receive Part C monies (direct aid) students must re-apply for financial aid annually. (Reference: Section 56226)

In addition, in order to remain eligible to receive EOPS/CARE programs and services a student must:

1. Apply for state and/or federal financial aid (applying for the BOGW meets this requirement); AND
2. Maintain academic progress towards a certificate, associate degree, or transfer goal; AND
3. File an initial EOPS/CARE application, and complete and adhere to a student educational plan and an EOPS/CARE mutual responsibility contract for programs and services; AND
4. Within two months of acceptance into the EOPS/CARE program, provide income documentation, public assistance documentation, or other documentation as required by the college of attendance in order to receive financial aid. (This provision pertains to direct aid recipients ONLY)
5. Students must be full time at census day. If they drop below 9 units during the semester, the grant will be canceled unless the student has been approved by EOPS under the disabled provision.

(Reference: Section 56222)

EOPS Book Service Program

- H. The EOPS Book Service Program provides EOPS-eligible students with books necessary for their success in reaching their educational goals and objectives. The EOPS Book Service Program may be used for required textbooks and workbooks only. EOPS students are not required to have unmet need to participate

in this program; therefore, this is considered an EOPS service. However, EOPS must notify the Financial Aid Office in a timely manner of any student who receives the book service.

1. Rules:

- Student must be EOPS-eligible and may or may not have completed his/her Financial Aid packaging.
 - EOPS must notify the Financial Aid Office in a timely manner of any student who receives the book service.
- Can only be used to purchase required textbooks and workbooks for classes enrolled in. The Book Service Program **does not** include other required materials, supplies, equipment, or uniforms.
- The books purchased through the Book Service Program are the property of the student and he/she **cannot** be required to return them to the EOPS office.
- The book service **cannot** be given to the student in the form of a check or cash.

EOPS Book Grant

- I. The EOPS Book Grant provides EOPS-eligible students with the resource to purchase the books necessary for their success in reaching their educational goals and objectives. The EOPS Book Grant is part of the Financial Aid package to help reduce unmet need. EOPS students are required to have completed their Financial Aid processing and have unmet need.

1. Rules:

- EOPS Book Grant can only be given to EOPS students who have completed their financial aid paperwork and have been determined to have unmet need. The EOPS Director determines the level of the grant.
- EOPS Book Grant can be given in the form of a check to the student or a voucher to the bookstore.
- Can be used to purchase required textbooks, workbooks and other related materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms for the classes they are enrolled in.
- The books purchased through a book grant are the property of the student and they **cannot** be required to return the books to the EOPS office.

EOPS Work Study

- J. Students must be EOPS book or grant eligible as entered into the system by EOPS staff.

EOPS Work Study will be awarded based on the hierarchy described in the Packaging chapter above ([Section 501](#)).

Students must be full-time at census day. If they drop below 9 units during the semester, the work assignment will be canceled unless the student has been approved by EOPS under the disabled provision.

- K. EOPS Meal Card Program

702.2 **Cal Grant Programs (B & C)**

Initial eligibility is determined by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC), but in general an applicant must:

- Be a resident of California or eligible under AB-540 or AB-1899,
- Have a valid Social Security number or valid CSAC ID number (Dream Act students),
- Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and
- Be eligible according to Grossmont College Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

A. Cal Grant B

The institution will determine financial need for Cal Grant B.

Maximum award is \$1,656.

B. Cal Grant C

The institution will determine financial need for Cal Grant C. Verification of eligible program will be completed by the institution.

Maximum award is \$547.

702.3

Board of Governors (BOG) Financial Assistance Program

A. Purpose

The primary purpose in allocating Board Financial Assistance Program funds is to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that no student who is eligible for financial aid and who desires to attend a community college, is denied access because of a mandatory enrollment fee. All students applying for a BOGW will be encouraged to apply for federal and state financial aid to ensure they are receiving all funds for which they may be eligible.

B. Waiver

The enrollment fee charged the student will be waived. A parking fee in excess of \$20 will have the amount in excess of \$20 waived. The Health fee may also be waived based upon District policy. A student may be eligible for Fall, Spring, and Summer in any given award year. Valid BOG Waiver Applications must be submitted before the end the term and waivers are not retroactive.

1. Method A - Enrollment Fee Waiver

- a. Be a California resident or eligible under the provisions of AB-540 or AB-1899.
- b. At the time of enrollment is a recipient of TANF, SSI (Supplemental Security Income), or GR (General Relief).
- c. Provide documentation to verify receipt of benefits, such as Notice of Action, copy of check, or untaxed income verification form.
- d. Method A eligible will have the Student Representation Fee waived.

2. Method B - Enrollment Fee Credit

- a. Be a California resident or eligible under the provisions of AB-540 or AB-1899.
- b. For a single independent student, the total 2014 income must not exceed \$17,505.
- c. For dependent, married, or single head of household, the total income must meet the following income standards:

No. in Household	Total Family 2014 Income
2	\$23,595 or less
3	\$29,685 or less
4	\$35,775 or less
5	\$41,865 or less
6	\$47,955 or less
7	\$54,045 or less
8	\$60,135 or less

Add \$6,090 for each additional dependent.

Provide proof income for 2014 – Copy of IRS Tax Transcript, if requested.

3. Method C - Board of Governors' Waiver

- a. Be a California resident or eligible under the provisions of AB-540 or AB-1899.

- b. Qualify on the basis of financial need (\$1,104 or more) as demonstrated on one of the following documents:
 - i. FAFSA
 - ii. California Dream Act Application
4. Special Classifications – waives enrollment fee only.
 - a. Certification from the California Department of Veterans Affairs or the National Guard Adjutant General of eligibility for a dependent’s fee waiver. Documentation required.
 - b. Recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor or the dependent child of a recipient, or a dependent of a victim of the 9/11/01 terrorist attack. Documentation required.
 - c. A dependent of deceased law enforcement/fire suppression personnel killed in the line of duty. Documentation required.

If students are eligible based on one of the above Special Classifications, they will be required to provide documentation proving they meet the condition. BOG Waivers approved under Special Classifications will only waive enrollment fees. Students approved under these criteria will still need to pay the health fee, the student representation fee and the full parking fee (if purchased).

702.4 **Child Development Grant**

The Child Development Grant Program (Program) is a need-based grant administered by the California Student Aid Commission designed to encourage students to enter the field of childcare and development in a licensed children’s center. Students who plan to enroll at least half-time in coursework leading to a Child Development Permit as teacher, master teacher, site supervisor or program director, are eligible to apply through the institution they plan to attend.

To receive funding, students must sign a Service Commitment Agreement stating they will provide one year of full-time service in a licensed children’s center for each year they receive the grant. A student must complete a FAFSA and a Child Development Grant Program Application. The application is available from the Child Development program coordinator and must be submitted by the College. Selected recipients are eligible to receive up to \$1,000 each academic year.

702.5 **Chafee Grant**

The Chafee Grant Program gives up to \$5,000 annually to current or former Foster Youth enrolled at least half time

To apply, a student must:

1. complete a FAFSA and the California Chafee Grant Program Application.
2. student must be eligible, or have been eligible for foster care between the 16th and 18th birthday, and not have reached the 22nd birthday as of July 1, 2014.
3. Students must be making satisfactory progress per Grossmont College Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

702.6 **Full-time Student Success Grant (FSSG)**

Initial eligibility is tied to full-time recipients of Cal Grant B, but in general an applicant must:

- Be a resident of California or eligible under the provisions of AB-540 or AB-1899,
- Demonstrate financial need,
- Not have a Bachelor’s or professional degree,
- Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or CA Dream Act application,
- Not owe a refund on any state or federal education grant,
- Not be in default on any student loan

- Not be incarcerated, and
- Be eligible according to Grossmont College Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

Maximum awards are \$300 per fall or spring term, not to exceed \$600 annually.

Full-time attendance is determined at the date at which the institution determines full-time enrollment payment status for Cal Grant B (for Grossmont College, this is Census Day).

703. OTHER PROGRAMS

[\(BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS\)](#)

703.1 **Scholarships**

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Scholarship Program at Grossmont College is to recognize outstanding achievement, encourage academic excellence, and offer support to meritorious students. The program is also responsible for processing scholarships awarded to students from outside organizations or sponsors. Scholarships are awarded on a very competitive basis by the Grossmont College Scholarship Advisory Committee. Merit scholarships are awarded solely on the basis of academic merit. Restricted scholarships are awarded on the basis of merit and one or more additional criteria, such as demonstrated financial need, study in a particular major, or leadership.

Any student wanting to defer fees while waiting on their scholarship disbursement from Financial Aid must see the Vice President of Student Services. B.

Categories

1. Institutional

- a. Scholarships Institutional (SIGC) - campus based scholarships funded by the Grossmont Cuyamaca Community College District and Grossmont College Foundation accounting systems. Money is donated to these funds by faculty, staff, companies, and various individuals. Scholarships are advertised, processed, and awarded by Grossmont College Advisory Committee.
- b. Scholarships Institutional, Outside Donor (SIOD) - campus based scholarships funded directly by the sponsor. We publicize their scholarship, collect applications and forward to sponsor. The sponsor selects their recipient and disburses their award.

2. Non-Institutional

- a. Scholarships Non-Institutional (SNI) - funded, publicized and awarded by outside sponsors to a student who is or will be attending Grossmont College. The sponsor forwards the check to the college for disbursement to the student. Students may be awarded for various enrollments.
- b. Scholarships Non-Institutional Manual (SNIM) - funded and awarded by outside sponsors to a student who is or will be attending Grossmont College. The sponsor forwards the check to the College for disbursement to the student. Students must meet certain requirements and are disbursed funds for approved expenses. All disbursements are manually processed.

3. Other

- a. AmeriCorps Scholarship (AMER) - funded and awarded by United States Treasury through the National AmeriCorps Program. Grossmont Scholarship Office coordinates the disbursements made to the college on behalf of the student. AmeriCorps vouchers may be used by the student to pay enrollment fees, to purchase textbooks and supplies or for living expenses (the student may utilize any or all of these options). To utilize the voucher for living expenses or a computer, the student must submit the signed voucher and the appropriate form for verification for the computer or rent to the Scholarship Specialist who will process the voucher.

- b. Golden State Scholarshare Program (GOVD) - funded and awarded by Golden State Scholarshare Trust. Grossmont Scholarship Office coordinates the disbursements made to the college on behalf of the student. Students may utilize this award to pay for enrollment fees and/or textbooks or pay for living expenses.
- c. Golden State Scholarshare Gear Up Program (GRUP) - scholarships funded and awarded by Scholarshare for the Gear Up Program. The Grossmont College Scholarship Office coordinates the disbursements made to the college on behalf of the student. Students may utilize this award to pay for enrollment fees and/or textbooks and the funds may also be used to pay for living expenses.
- d. San Diego Foundation Scholarships (SDFD) - funded and awarded by San Diego Foundation. Grossmont Scholarship Office facilitates the disbursement using the manual request process.
- e. OPT Program Scholarships (OPTS) - funded and awarded by Grossmont College Office Professional Training Program. Scholarship awards are disbursed at the Office Professional Training graduation ceremony.
- f. Grossmont College American Indian (GCAI) - funded and awarded by Grossmont College American Indian fund. Scholarships are advertised and processed the first 4-5 weeks of the semester. Students are reimbursed their tuition fees up to the current per unit rate.

C. Scholarship Check Procedures

1. Check made payable to the school.
 - Get a copy of the award letter if available.
 - Make a copy of the check to give to the student for their records.
 - Post check to the student's financial aid record for disbursement.
2. Check made payable to the school and the student.
 - Get a copy of the award letter.
 - Make a copy of the check to give to the student for their records.
 - Confirm that student has met sponsor requirements.
 - Take the check to the district accounting office and have it endorsed.
 - Deliver check to the cashier's office for student pick up.
3. Check made payable to the student only.
 - Get a copy of the award letter.
 - Make a copy of the check for Scholarship office records.
 - Confirm that student has met sponsor requirements.
 - Give the check back to the student.
4. Depositing checks (to District Accounting).
 - Enter data into database file SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS (Check Deposits Worksheet & Student Accounts Worksheet).
 - Print out the Check Deposit report and have the Scholarship Specialist sign. Make a copy to be scanned for department records and send original along with checks to District Accounting.
 - Outside agency awards are direct gifts to students and not included in accounting for the college and or foundation. The current process will continue in an effort to maintain the integrity of the Financial Aid Program and avoid over-awards.
5. Requesting checks for students.
 - From District Accounting - Request check(s) against appropriate scholarship fund(s) in the Check Requests sheet in the SCHOLARSHIP FUND database. Enter disbursement in the Student Accounts sheet in the SCHOLARSHIP FUND

database. Print out the Check Request report and have the Director sign. Make a copy for department records and send original to Accounting. A check will be mailed to the student by the Accounting Department within three to four weeks.

- From Grossmont College Foundation - Request check(s) against appropriate scholarship fund(s) using the Grossmont College Foundation Check Request Form. Retain the pink copy and send originals to Grossmont College Foundation office. A check will be mailed to the student by the Grossmont College Foundation within two weeks.

6. Handling donations.

- Enter data into database file SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS (Incoming Check Sheet).
- Complete a Deposit Slip.
- Use the deposit bank stamp on each check.
- Complete a Bank deposit slip.
- Send deposit slip, bank deposit slip and checks to Grossmont College Foundation Office.

703.2 VA Educational Benefits

VA Benefits are no longer reported on the FAFSA and are not used in the federal formulas to determine an EFC. More detailed information on VA Educational Benefits and current rates may be obtained at: http://www.gibill.va.gov/resources/benefits_resources/comparison_of_monetary_benefits.html.

703.3 Tribal Grants - Bureau of Indian Affairs Awards (BIA)

A. Purpose

The purpose of this program is to encourage students of Native American ancestry to continue their education beyond high school for the purpose of developing leadership and increasing employment opportunities in professional and vocational fields.

B. Maximum and Minimum Awards

Awards vary with policies established by each agency of the BIA. Generally, undergraduate assistance is provided for only four years, unless it is demonstrated that an additional year of study is necessary to complete the student's program.

C. Eligible Students

In addition to meeting the requirements of all federal programs, students must be at least one-fourth Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut as recognized by a tribal group served by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

D. Application Requirements

1. Students make application to the appropriate BIA area office.
2. Students must also apply for financial aid. The aid administrator determines the student's need and makes awards from other programs in accordance with institutional and aid program policy.
3. The aid administrator reports to the BIA office the student's need and the award(s) that have been offered.
4. The BIA office makes an award to the student. If the BIA award and the student's other aid does not exceed the need, no adjustment to the award is necessary. If the BIA award does exceed the student's need, an adjustment to the student's other aid awards will be completed in this sequence:
 - i. the reduction of student expected contribution (self-help),
 - ii. the reduction of Federal Stafford Student Loan,
 - iii. the reduction of Federal Work Study,
 - iv. the reduction of grant aid (FSEOG, EOPS/CARE).

The above sequence may be altered at the student's request if appropriate.

E. Renewal Requirements

Students must make acceptable academic progress, annually submit a written request for grant continuation, and submit other documents as required by the BIA office.

F. Disbursement of Awards

Since BIA awards are not institutionally administered, the disbursement of funds is regulated by instructions from the BIA office that administers the awards.

703.4 Dreamkeepers Emergency Assistance Program

Developed with support from the Lumina Foundation for Education and the Wal-Mart Foundation, the Dreamkeepers Emergency Financial Assistance program at Grossmont College can provide students with emergency funding to allow them to remain in school when faced with unexpected financial hardships.

Students must:

- be enrolled in a minimum of 6 units at Grossmont College,
- demonstrate satisfactory academic progress by maintaining a minimum overall 2.0 GPA for all completed college coursework,
- be seeking a certificate, degree or transfer objective to receive this assistance, and
- be able to document an extreme personal/financial emergency.

Students must complete the online application and submit it along with appropriate documentation to support their request for emergency funds. Awarded students will receive an award check co-payable to the student and the service provider.

703.5 Emergency Loans

A. LEWM Fund - Up to \$200 Maximum.

1. Available during semester for books and supplies for EOPS eligible students.
2. Six (6) unit minimum requirement.
3. An extreme personal or financial emergency that is documented may be considered. Rent and utility bills are not considered emergencies. Emergencies are unusual expenses that are non-recurring.
4. Applications may not be processed until the semester begins.

B. Students who do not have a financial aid award from which to deduct the loan amount will be required to have a co-signer. The co-signer must be over 21 and employed full-time (not on Financial Aid), can be parent or guardian and must have local address and phone number. The Financial Aid Office must be able to contact co-signer at work and/or at home to verify employment and signature. Full-time employees of Grossmont College are not eligible for emergency loan funds. Students who have received Financial Aid funds are not eligible for emergency loans for 30 days after receipt of funds. Funds are only available during the fall and spring semesters. Loans are not available for summer sessions. Students are eligible for one loan per semester - no exceptions.

Staffing Model

This tool allows you to compare your staff size to similar institutions and get an analysis of where you stand. Our Staffing Model allows you to enter a number of variables that are statistically significant in determining staff size in financial aid offices, and generates a custom report that measures your institution's staffing level against other institutions operating in similar circumstances. The 2017 Staffing Model is based on data collected from a survey of members we conducted in October 2016. The results of this survey are fully described in *2017 NASFAA Benchmarking Report* (*/2017_nasfaa_benchmarking_report*). The report will orient you to the parameters required by the Staffing Model and help you interpret your results. The data you input is only used for the purposes of calculation and is not stored in your membership profile or on the NASFAA website in any way.

Institution Type:	Public, 2-year
NASFAA Regional Affiliation:	WASFAA
Total Number of Undergraduate Students:	25948
Total Number of Graduate/Professional Students:	0
Total Number of Financial Aid Applicants:	25277
Total Number of Financial Aid Recipients:	14990
Which best describes your financial aid office environment?	Centralized Administration, traditional
Does your institution have a one-stop shop?	Yes

PERMANENT, UNDUPLICATED FTE EMPLOYEES

Excluding the financial aid office, indicate the total number of permanent FTE employees across the following departments who are also involved in some aspect of financial aid administration (e.g., admissions counselor who also assists with financial aid applications)

Student Accounts / Cashier / Bursar:	0.5
Admissions:	1.0
Registrar:	0.0
Career Services / Student Employment Office:	0.0
Scholarship Office (if separate from Financial Aid):	0.0
Loan Collection:	0.0
Veterans Services Office:	0.0
Institutional Advancement / Fund Raising Office:	0.0
Accounting / Comptroller:	1.0
Gear Up:	0.0
TRIO:	0.0
Academic Advising:	2.0
Athletics:	0.0
Student Affairs:	0.0
Residence Life:	0.0
Other:	0.0

Staff Size Benchmarking

Your school compares to other institutions of your type, size, and location as follows. Please note that these results do not necessarily benchmark your optimal staffing level. The results are based on a survey of financial aid offices, and if the surveyed offices were understaffed, this normative model may calculate an average that is less than the actual number required to provide an optimal staffing level.

Average FTE for similar institutions: 20.31

[View Desktop Version \(https://www.nasfaa.org/staffing_model?viewfullsite=1\)](https://www.nasfaa.org/staffing_model?viewfullsite=1)

© NASFAA. All rights reserved.
1801 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 850, Washington, DC 20006-3606
T: (202) 785-0453 F: (202) 785-1487 E: info@nasfaa.org