1. Program or Unit Description

Financial Aid is committed to assist the College in meeting its enrollment and retention goals, by providing access to assist students and their families to seek and obtain financial resources needed to pursue and complete their higher educational goals. Serve as the primary liaison to the US Department of Education, and as the College’s lead in tracking, monitoring, and communicating the changes in federal student aid regulations. Financial aid works with the College’s Student Services Departments to stay abreast of changes in institutional practices, new programs and initiatives to ensure compliance with the federal student aid regulations so that we can continue to offer federal aid.

2. Analysis of the Program/Unit

Financial Aid works toward assisting all students to achieve their educational goals by providing financial assistance as they are deemed eligible through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Provide students with information on filing and completing FAFSA and researching external resources to increase the number of students who receive aid, especially the Pell Grant. Each academic year, we will continue to review, evaluate and update our internal process to make the aid process more efficient, compliant and student friendly.

Financial aid applicants and enrollment:
Based on Enrollment Headcount of Regular Student data from the University of Hawaii Institution Research and Assessment Office (IRAO) over the last 4 year by an average of 4.54%. During the same timeframe, financial aid applications received has decreased by an average of 3.80% each year. With the decline in enrollment and FAFSA received in the last four academic year, the percentage of Enrolled Financial Aid Applicants also decreased by an average of 4.90% each year.

Financial aid applicants awarded and enrolled:
Based on Financial Aid Applicants Awarded data, over 70% of enrolled students received a financial aid award in the past four academic years. Data also shows that students that have received a financial aid award and enrolled have increased. But, what is concerning is that the number of Federal Pell Grant eligible recipients has steadily declined the last four academic years.

Unit Data over the last 4 years:
Enrollment Headcount of Regular Students
Fall 2016 Census: 6831
Fall 2017 Census: 6381
Fall 2018 Census: 6081
Fall 2019 Census: 5964

Total Financial Aid Applicants (FAFSA Received)
Academic Year 2016-17: 6942
Academic Year 2017-18: 7473
Academic Year 2018-19: 6940
Academic Year 2019-20: 6493
Total number of Financial Aid Applicants that Enrolled
Academic Year 2016-17: 3843
Academic Year 2017-18: 3725
Academic Year 2018-19: 3414
Academic Year 2019-20: 3390

Percent of Enrolled Financial Aid Applicants
Academic Year 2016-17: 55.4%
Academic Year 2017-18: 49.9%
Academic Year 2018-19: 49.2%
Academic Year 2019-20: 52.2%

Total number of Financial Aid Applicants Awarded for AY
Academic Year 2016-17: 3086
Academic Year 2017-18: 3410
Academic Year 2018-19: 3152
Academic Year 2019-20: 3253

Total number of Financial Aid Applicants Awarded and Enrolled in AY
Academic Year 2016-17: 2808
Academic Year 2017-18: 2906
Academic Year 2018-19: 2709
Academic Year 2019-20: 2747

Percent of Financial Aid Applicants Awarded / Enrollment Headcount of Regular Students
Academic Year 2016-17: 45.2%
Academic Year 2017-18: 53.4%
Academic Year 2018-19: 51.8%
Academic Year 2019-20: 54.5%

Percent of Financial Aid Applicants Awarded / FAFSA’s Received
Academic Year 2016-17: 44.5%
Academic Year 2017-18: 45.6%
Academic Year 2018-19: 45.4%
Academic Year 2019-20: 50.1%

Percent of Financial Aid Applicants Awarded and Enrolled by Academic Year
Academic Year 2016-17: 73.1%
Academic Year 2017-18: 78.0%
Academic Year 2018-19: 79.4%
Academic Year 2019-20: 81.2%
Total Federal Pell Grant Recipients in AY
Academic Year 2016-17: 2110
Academic Year 2017-18: 2040
Academic Year 2018-19: 1771
Academic Year 2019-20: 1759

3. Program Student Learning Outcomes or Unit/Service Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SAOs):
1. Increase the number of students that visit the FAO Office.
   - Create a warm, friendly and caring environment for students.
   - Interact with students with compassion, care and professionalism.
   - Increase visibility of the financial aid office staff by participating in campus activities offered at the college.
2. Increase the number of applying for financial aid and scholarships.
   - Work with our Recruitment Office on off-campus Admission/FAFSA activities for High School student and families.
   - Work on developing partnerships with other campus programs (especially those aimed at student support, engagement, and retention) in an effort to scale up efforts and reach a larger group of students with information about financial aid.
   - Increase targeted email correspondence to Leeward CC students regarding FAFSA and Scholarship application assistance.
3. Increase the number of students receiving financial aid.
   - Work with UHCC sister campuses on best practices on processing and procedures.
   - Increase targeted email correspondence and phone calls to students regarding FAFSA and Scholarship application completion.
   - Create calendar to ensure the office meets important deadlines for awarding, disbursement, academic progress and review for financial aid compliance.
4. FAO will comply with regulatory requirements necessary to participate in federal and state programs.
   - Annually update Policy and Procedures.
   - Annual/bi-annual Staff Training.
   - Remain compliant in annual audit.

Assessment of Service Outcomes:
Efficiency/Effectiveness:
In the past 5 years, all measures have steadily decreased. The only measures that have we have seen an increase in is students awarded and student awarded and enrolled for academic year 2019-20. Students awarded increased by 3.2% and Student awarded and Enrolled increase by 1.4%. We cannot determine the reasons for the steady dropped on FAFSA’s received each year, but we will keep up with up our FAFSA completion email notifications to application, FAFSA’s completion workshop, and financial aid outreach activities.
4. Action Plan

Financial Aid will continue work toward its Program Mission to assist the College in meeting its enrollment and retention goals by providing access to student financial assistance to students to pursue and complete their higher educational goals. We also understand that students may refrain from applying for financial aid for a number of reasons related to misinformation about financial aid qualifications or misunderstandings about the process. Communication and outreach efforts will continue to clarify any myth students and their families may have by providing basic education about and promoting awareness of the financial aid process. Efforts will also involve opportunities for the Financial Aid staff to engage students and their families through direct assistance, whether through the office’s own outreach efforts or curriculum implemented by counselors or other student support entities.

Continuing Goals and Plans for 2020-2021 Academic Year:

1. Actively work with Recruitment Office to educate and heighten awareness about how students can receive student financial assistance to pay for their education through workshops at high school and in the community. Maintain and update website and other information portals. Assist students in completing their financial aid applications so that they have the ability to afford their education - high school workshops, one-on-one sessions. Identify and actively reach out to students who have outstanding application requirements needed for FAFSA completion.

2. Early awarding of financial aid and scholarships to new and continuing students to facilitate decision-making/planning for their continued education. Continue to develop and improve early awarding process of financial aid and scholarships.

3. Work with administration to utilize non-need institutional aid to provide scholarships that incentivize continuing enrollment, retention and degree completion.

4. Work with UH System Office to create a faster and more efficient processes, including but not limited to Awarding, Verification, Student Loan Exits, Funds Reconciliation, Identification of Attendance/Participation, student who drop/withdraw from part-of-term courses and etc. Creating more efficient processes will give Financial Aid more time to do more outreach and work one-on-one with students.

5. Annually review and updated Financial Aid Unit Data Points, Analysis and Service Outcomes to align with the College’s enrollment and retention goals. Work with OPPA and Dean of Student Services to create reports needed.

5. Resource Implications

As COVID-19 continues to affect our state and our economy, we have come to the realization that we are in immediate need of technological assistance to help us utilize our student information system in a more efficient way. To create automated auditing process to help staff be more efficient in reviewing student files for the federal verification, cost of attendance/budgeting, automating financial aid awarding, more efficient to identify and notify students who drop from modular courses, statistical data for reporting, and etc. A dedicated full-time IT support in Student Services would be beneficial not only for Financial Aid, but for the entire Student Services Division.
An IT position would allow us:

1. To work more efficiently with our Student Information System (Banner) by automating process such as job scheduling, Budgeting, Awarding, SAP and R2T4 calculations, second degree review and writing algorithms for awarding financial aid equitably distributing aid based on more complex calculation;
2. Free up time to do more financial aid outreach and individualized advising with student and families;
3. Assistance in data collection, assessment and surveys;
4. Support and maintain financial aid webpage.

The estimated cost for temporary APT position:

- APT Band B and Fringe, Step 1 to Step 5, FTE 1.00
  - Estimated costs $67,750 - $73,375