

Institutional Overview

(Good Practice Suggestion)

An institutional overview provides information specific to your institution that provides colleagues with an understanding of your financial aid operations.

Name of Institution: BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OPE ID: 0010300

Bishop State Community College Mission Statement:

The Mission of Bishop State Community College is to provide high-quality educational opportunities and services that are responsive to individual and community needs for the citizenry of Mobile and Washington counties at an affordable cost. The college utilizes traditional and distance learning to accomplish its mission. Bishop State Community College fulfills its mission by offering the following:

- **Transfer education** designed to prepare students at the freshman and sophomore levels for transfer to other colleges and universities.
- **General education courses** in the liberal arts and sciences to support all college degree programs.
- **Technical, vocational, occupational and career education courses** that prepare students for immediate employment, retrain existing employees, and promote local and state economic stability and competitiveness.
- **Partnerships** with business, industry, and professional groups to assess and fulfill training needs to meet workforce demands.
- **Developmental education** to assist individuals in order to improve learning skills and overcome educational deficiencies to bring their basic skills to a level appropriate for college-level work.
- **Academic support services** that include a learning resource center and basic skills activities that enhance instruction.
- **Student Support Services** that provide advising, counselling, tutoring, financial assistance and social and cultural activities for all students, including those with special needs.
- **Continuing education and personal enrichment** opportunities that support lifelong learning and the civic, social and cultural quality of life.
- **Conducive learning environments** equipped with classroom technology and attractive physical campuses.
- **Continuous assessment** through research and development of programs and services and the utilization of results for improvement.

Introduction

Activities in the Financial Aid office (FAO), as complex as they are, are but one small part of the institution. However, they relate in very significant ways to every unit of the College and are critical to the enrollment of students. Experience has shown that written policies and procedures promote consistency, continuity, and understanding for any administrative operation. Written policies also help the financial aid administrators in consistently achieving fair and equitable interpretations of policies which require decisive action on a recurring basis. In addition, students, staff, faculty, and other administrators will better understand their roles when they realize that the policies are written and are uniformly administered.

The processes for delivering Title IV federal student aid in postsecondary schools have become highly specialized, technical, and complex undertakings. As professionals in this field, we must be effective in a variety of roles and duties which have a vital impact on the integrity of the institution as well as on its total enrollment. Every member of the financial aid staff must understand and fully execute their responsibilities in order to administer the various student assistance programs and provide sorely needed services to students in an attempt to fulfill the goals and objectives of the department and the institution.

The purposes of the Policies and Procedures Manual are listed below. The policy will be followed by all financial aid staff personnel, in order to help students meet their individual goals:

1. To provide a uniform, systematic approach to administering the student assistance programs at Bishop State Community College.
2. To provide professional growth and development opportunities for the financial aid staff.
3. To provide a useful guidebook for new staff persons and other interested college personnel concerning the College's financial aid programs.

This manual will be reviewed and updated at least annually. However, changes in local, state, and federal regulations will be implemented immediately upon receipt.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF FINANCIAL AID

The fundamental purpose of the Financial Aid Programs at Bishop State Community College is to remove the barriers to education for students who would be denied the opportunity to attend college without such financial assistance. The College follows the federal and state regulations while maintaining an organized, systematic approach to administration of its financial aid programs. Maximum awards are made to students according to documented need, based on available resources. The philosophy and purpose of the Financial Aid Program coincide with the over-all philosophy and purpose of Bishop State Community College.

PHILOSOPHY: The financial aid staff recognizes the values and needs of the individual, of business and industry, and of the community in its philosophy, concepts, and functions. Consequently, it seizes every opportunity to provide grants, scholarships, and employment assistance to help students develop the technical skills, educational competencies, and desirable work habits and ethics that are so vital to their success in penetrating the business and educational arenas.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: The Goals of the Bishop State Community College Financial Aid Program are:

1. To provide a student assistance program which will sustain and continually increase the College's enrollment.
2. To meet the needs of students, to the greatest extent possible, so that no persons will be denied the opportunity to attain a college education because of insufficient finances.
3. To maintain a professional staff that is efficient and effective in serving students, and to keep up to date on local, state, and federal regulations.
4. To coordinate financial aid awards through the financial aid office institution wide.

OBJECTIVES: The objectives of the BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE financial aid program are:

1. All available financial resources will be administered to qualified students based on their documented need, regardless of race, sex, creed, religion, disability, or national origin (including grants, scholarships, and employment opportunities).

2. Annual student budgets will be published on the College's website, which will clearly outline the costs of attendance at BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE and the minimum/maximum levels of assistance that each student may receive during the academic year.
3. Students and/or their families are expected to assist with their college expenses which will be determined from the calculation of their expected family contribution (EFC).
4. To expect a student to provide a reasonable part of their financial aid through self help by accepting employment. Some grants and scholarships are awarded based on the conditions of part-time employment.
5. Every effort will be made to avoid the over-awarding of financial aid to students.
6. Corrections will be made immediately if an error occurs.
7. All students will make application through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) prior to receiving assistance from any campus-based financial aid program.
8. Students and prospective students will be apprised of the various financial assistance programs through the college's catalog, newsletters and other communications in order to enhance their awareness of financial aid opportunities.
9. To counsel students on the efficient use of their total financial resources.

Financial Aid Calendar

January	Spring attendance verification, notification of no-show status, and No-Show Appeal deadline
	Credit balance refunds are disbursed
March 15	Summer FA deadline
May	Summer attendance verification, notification of no-show status, and No-Show Appeal deadline
June	Credit balance refunds are disbursed
June 15	Fall FA deadline
July 1	New grant year begins
August	Fall attendance verification, notification of no-show status, and No-Show Appeal deadline
August 31	The College's ASAP application is due to the State
September	Credit balance refunds are disbursed
September 30	Last date to submit disbursement records
October 1	FISAP is due
	Publish & distribute annual institutional security report
November 1	Spring FA deadline
December 15	FISAP corrections deadline

Weekly – Calculate official withdrawal R2T4; notify students, return Title IV funds

Monthly - Reconcile Title IV program disbursements