

Administrative Unit Assessment Report

Assessment is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that "The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to **SAVE** your progress as you work!

Administrative Unit
Financial Aid

Submission Year
2025-2026

Assessment Coordinator Name
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Unit Goal

Goal

Goal 1

Unit Goals are broad statements that describe the overarching long-range intended outcomes of an administrative unit. They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Unit Goal

Comply with reporting requirements and maintain compliance with federal and state laws in order to obtain the maximum amount of funding possible. This will allow Lander the continued ability to recruit and retain students by offering a competitive financial aid package that meets the needs of the students that we serve.

Pillar of Success Supported

Selective, Competitive Recruitment and Enrollment of Ambitious and Talented Students

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals. They will primarily describe what the unit is going to do and what its impact will be on students and other key stakeholders (alumni, parents, employers, etc.).

Most administrative units measure **Operational Outcomes** which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. number of services provided, timeliness of a process).

Some units may measure **Student Learning Outcomes** which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences (ex. Student Wellness Program may measure student knowledge of healthy habits.)

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Meet state & federal reporting deadlines to ensure the maximum amount of state & federal funding that Lander receives for scholarship use.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

Continued maximum funding from state and federal agencies

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Reduced funding from the state and federal agencies

Performance Target for "Not Met"

No funding from the state and federal agencies

Assessment Measure Used

State Reports
Federal Reports

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We received an increase in state & federal funding for scholarships

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

State and federal reports were submitted in a timely manner which resulted in an increase in state and federal funding. We received another increase in state funding, specifically, SC Need Based Grant, which allows us to help more students. Our federal funding, SEOG & FWS, also increased.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

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What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ensure that we are complying with federal regulations to continue Title IV funding which is vital to meeting the financial needs of our new and returning students.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

No findings on federal audit and continued federal Title IV funding

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

At least 1 finding on financial aid audit and continued federal Title IV funding

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Multiple findings on federal audit and decreased/no federal Title IV funding

Assessment Measure Used

Financial Aid Audit

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We had zero findings on our financial aid audit and continued Title IV funding

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Financial aid audit is complete and we had zero findings on the audit. We are in good standing with Title IV regulations.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used****Outcome 3**

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What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Stay abreast of industry changes and best practices by attending conferences and workshops

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

Each financial aid staff member attend at least 1 conference or workshop

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

At least half of the financial aid staff attend at least 1 conference or workshop

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Zero financial aid staff attend at least 1 conference or workshop

Assessment Measure Used

Virtual conferences and workshops

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

Each financial aid staff member was able to attend at least 1 conference or workshop

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Conferences and workshops are vital to keep financial aid staff abreast of industry changes and best practices. The FSA training was virtual, so we all participated. We each participated in several webinars throughout the year. This year of training was very important due to all of the changes for 2024-25.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Reporting guidelines and timelines met. Will continue to improve on efficient ways to gather data.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We are continuing to implement new systems & processes that will make the data gathering process even more efficient and accurate.

Upload Files (if needed)

Goal 2

Unit Goals are broad statements that describe the overarching long-range intended outcomes of an administrative unit. They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Unit Goal

Publicize aid opportunities and serve as a resource to campus and the larger community to increase retention and enrollment, while focusing on student debt.

Pillar of Success Supported

Selective, Competitive Recruitment and Enrollment of Ambitious and Talented Students

Outcomes

Outcome 1

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What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Educate high school students and their parents about the financial aid process in order to maximize their aid eligibility by participating in high school FAFSA workshops and presentations.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

Participate in at least 5 high school financial aid functions

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Participate in at least 3 high school financial aid functions

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Not participating in any high school financial aid functions

Assessment Measure Used

of high school functions participated in

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We participated in a total of 8 high school financial aid functions.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Financial aid functions at high schools are important to educate high school students about the financial aid process. These events help to maximize a student's aid eligibility which helps to meet their financial needs towards the cost of their education. We would like to continue increasing the number of high school functions that we are able to participate in. We have signed up to participate in several college goal workshops to help students complete their FAFSA. We also plan to offer a FAFSA workshop on campus.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 2

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What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Integrate financial literacy activities into the campus culture

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

Hold multiple financial literacy activities that focus on student debt

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Discuss ideas for a financial literacy with no integration

Performance Target for "Not Met"

No additional integration or discussion of financial literacy activities

Assessment Measure Used

Amount and type of outreach of financial literacy events on and off campus

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We did initiate 1 financial literacy activity. My goal is to do more. We were so busy during 2024-25 keeping up with changes in federal regs that we did not get to implement all financial literacy programs that we would of liked to.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

2

Comments/Narrative

College students are making financial decisions that will have lasting financial implications. It is our responsibility to educate them to the best of our ability on resources available that will help with the cost of their education. By integrating some additional methods of financial literacy, we are seeing immediate results in enrollment & retention. As a part of this integration of financial literacy, we also saw our new 3-year loan cohort default rate decrease. This is due to reasons such as students being more informed about borrowing and being educated about making smart financial decisions.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 3

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What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Implement ways to market institutional scholarship opportunities to new and current students.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-25

Performance Target for "Met"

Implement at least 1 new way of marketing institutional scholarship opportunities and simplify the scholarship application process.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Implement at least 1 new way of marketing institutional scholarship opportunities

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Continue marketing institutional scholarship opportunities

Assessment Measure Used

New marketing methods for institutional scholarship awareness

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We were able to implement a new way of communicating with students/parents regarding scholarship opportunities.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Our goal of publicizing aid opportunities and serve as a resource to campus and the larger community is ongoing. Even though we made great improvements in many areas with outreach to high schools and current students, we can continue to improve and implement creative ways to market financial aid opportunities to students and parents. During 24-25 we held virtual meetings with parents/students to discuss scholarships awarded and additional scholarship opportunities based on individual needs. We also used marketing materials and our FANs (Financial Aid Notifications) that were mailed to the homes of FTF. We have integrated QR codes into our brochures that are easy for the student to scan which will take them directly to our scholarship opportunities. We have also began making videos which can

be helpful in showing students how to apply for aid.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Publicize aid opportunities and serve as a resource to campus and the larger community to increase retention and enrollment, while focusing on student debt has been a huge focus for us this year. We have seen positive results from the efforts that we have made up until this point. Our FAFSA completion #'s have increased, our loan default rate has decreased and our enrollment and retention has increased. We will continue these efforts to meet the students needs.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

I would like to further decrease our loan default rate, so there are other methods that we will be implementing to help with that. We will continue to reach out and publicize aid opportunities. I would like to see a shift in campus culture to where students view financial aid as a place of assistance and feels comfortable with the financial aid office and receives the excellent service that they trust us to provide. I would also like to see a shift in campus culture to where other departments more understand the role of financial aid and provide support to our office. This would allow for all departments to work as a team towards one goal of providing students with the tools to be successful as they work towards their educational goals.

Upload Files (if needed)

Goal 3

Unit Goals are broad statements that describe the overarching long-range intended outcomes of an administrative unit. They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Unit Goal

Provide accurate and timely service to students and create a shift in campus culture on how students view the office of financial aid

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Outcomes

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that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences (ex. Student Wellness Program may measure student knowledge of healthy habits.)

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Implement electronic processes to where the students have the ability to securely submit documents at the touch of a button.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

Full implementation of dynamic forms which is a service that allows us to integrate electronic forms

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Partial implementation of dynamic forms which is a service that allows us to integrate electronic forms

Performance Target for "Not Met"

No implementation of dynamic forms which is a service that allows us to integrate electronic forms

Assessment Measure Used

Implementation of dynamic forms

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We were able to fully implement dynamic forms.
We have almost all of our financial aid forms developed in Dynamic Forms.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Students are able to fully utilize dynamic forms to submit confidential documents to financial aid. We will continue the implementation to include additional forms, as well as, some additional automated processes.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Additional training with Dynamic Forms

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

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Program may measure student knowledge of healthy habits.)

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Cross training for financial aid employees to ensure that we are capable of providing the best customer service to our students and parents both effectively and efficiently.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

Performance Target for "Met"

Complete cross training amongst all financial aid staff

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Partial cross training amongst some of the financial aid staff

Performance Target for "Not Met"

No cross training amongst the financial aid staff

Assessment Measure Used

Knowledge of each financial aid staff member and service provided to students and parents

Frequency of Assessment

On Going

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

We were able to provide some cross training opportunities, but only in the positions that needed it the most. We will continue working on this.

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

2

Comments/Narrative

We have made great strides in our cross-training endeavors, but we still have more cross training to do. We are training strategically based on the maximum benefit of our services to students and parents. We have 1 new financial aid counselor and 1 new front office employee which does hinder the cross training endeavors a bit until they are fully trained on their specific job duties.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Financial aid is extremely important as students navigate the process of choosing college, attending college and obtaining their degree. It is one office on campus that provides a service to the student from the time of inquiry and beyond graduation. As an office and as a campus, we need to work towards a shift in the campus culture of how students view financial aid. I would like for our office to be viewed as a place for assistance in navigating and educating the students and parents to maximize their aid eligibility.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Continue with cross training and work on implementing processes that will help with the flow of traffic and

phone calls during our crazy season. Continue to motivate financial aid staff by praising them and thanking them for the service that they provide to all students and parents.

Upload Files (if needed)