

**USC Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships 2009-10 Departmental Blueprint  
05/27/10 End-of-Year Performance Blueprint**

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships (OSFAS) is to educate and assist students and their families in securing the funding that they need coupled with providing leadership to the University in obtaining and administering federal, state, institutional and privately funded financial aid and scholarship resources for which students are eligible. These efforts are guided by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators statement of Ethical Principals and maintained in compliance with the rules and regulations set forth by the various funding sources.

It is the vision of the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships to be recognized as one of the offices, if not the office, on campus that provides the highest quality of student/customer service.

**Five-Year Comparison of Office Activity and Accomplishment**

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>2005-2006*</b>	<b>2006-2007</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>2008-2009**</b>
<b>Grants and Scholarships</b>					
Number of Awards	26,983	30,105	29,001	30,302	32,029
Dollars	85,809,676	99,058,676	106,636,334	117,881,438	127,948,771
<b>Employment</b>					
Number of Awards	6,206	6,666	6,705	6,501	6,555
Dollars	27,694,875	31,327,773	32,095,931	33,348,321	34,956,504
<b>Loans</b>					
Number of Awards	22,424	24,369	24,718	24,331	27,472
Dollars	124,557,246	142,418,049	148,077,062	158,693,800	178,897,204
<b>Totals</b>					
Number of Awards	55,613	61,140	60,424	61,134	66,056
Number of Awards Unduplicated	21,029	22,343	22,748	23,400	24,572
Dollars	238,061,797	272,804,498	286,809,327	309,923,559	341,802,479

\*2005-2006 and later figures reflect some adjustments in data gathering processes as well as to data being presented. Therefore, comparisons are not completely consistent.

\*\*Final figures as of 10/06/09

Total Application	35,916	37,453	36,566	37,948	41,419
Need-Based Applications	26,831	28,358	26,992	27,988	30,645

The average annual number of FAFSA applications verified/reviewed is 9,350. While the number has not grown appreciably, staff has had to become much more knowledgeable of IRS information in order to meet growing demands within this responsibility.

Goal #1: Administer the University's scholarship program to best serve student recipients, support student recruitment and retention efforts, support departmental initiatives tied to their scholarship selections, and support any specific agenda presented and associated with the identification of and/or delivery of non-University scholarships.

Analysis of Goal #1 Achievement: As of this report, the OSFAS has administered \$21,109,792 in University scholarships to 8,057 students, \$43,885,588 in state scholarships to 7,777 students, and \$22,693,906 in non-institutional scholarships to 4,890 students in a responsible and timely manner. Final expenditure figures will not be available until after June 30 and annual expenditure reporting will not be completed until after September 30. Indications at this time suggest activity in the scholarship programs will remain at a level approximately equal to or in excess of 2008-09 awards. There is potential that both the number of awards and their volume has been affected during this period of economic uncertainty although there has been no actual attempt to identify the potential impact.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #1, Outcome A

Initiative #1 (a): Administer General University Scholarship program awards to recipients in a timely manner; provide information in response to inquiries about the program; provide notifications to continuing recipients in jeopardy of losing their awards; and provide report information about the program as requested

KPI: 98% or greater of awards are posted to students' files within five work days of receiving initial notification listings and within 48 hours of any update or later listing; all awards are appropriately posted

KPI: OSFAS participated in each Undergraduate Admissions program to which it was invited, all of the daily Orientation Information Fairs and parent sessions, and numerous other organized information sharing events. Staff responds to 95% or greater of ongoing inquiries for information within 72 hours of receipt; in every case a response is provided

KPI: 98% or greater of students in jeopardy of losing their scholarships will be notified within five work days of spring grades being posted; all will be notified as quickly as they are identified

KPI: 100% of scholarship reporting will be accomplished within the requested timeframe or an agreed upon adjustment

Initiative #1 (b): Administer the University's Departmental Scholarship program awards immediately upon notification of the awards and maintain a data base of available award information as provided by departments

KPI: 98% or greater of departmental scholarship awards are posted to student's files within 48 hours of notification receipt; all get posted as quickly as possible

KPI: 100% of requests for scholarship data base updates from departments are added to the office webpage

Initiative #1 (c): Administer non-University scholarships according to the rules and regulations of specific programs or according to the directive of the

scholarship awarding entity

KPI: 100% of the 6,433 SC LIFE and HOPE Scholarship recipients for 2009-10 were identified and awarded

KPI: 98% or greater of award recipient notifications from non-University entities are posted to student files within five work days if the program notification included many recipients and within 48 hours for individual or smaller group awards; all awards are posted as quickly as possible

Goal #2: Administer the University's student financial aid grant programs in a manner that meets individual program compliance responsibilities and, to the extent of funding program eligibility and availability, best serves student applicants'/recipients' needs

Analysis of Goal #2 Achievement: As of this report, grants to students from the federal and state governments and the institution total approximately \$35 million. This amount already exceeds the volume of grants received by students in 2008-09 by approximately \$7 million. Significant increases in both Pell Grant awards and the number of recipients are reflective of the economic challenges that are being faced by many students. The Pell dollars awarded increase also reflects that students, beginning this year, are allowed to receive up to two full Pell Grants in any given award year. The University's \$2,500 award to each of the over 200 Gamecock Guarantee participants and the infusion of \$400,000 in institutional funding for need-based grants also play an important role in the increase in grant funding that students are experiencing during the current year. Final grant funding figures will be available soon after September 30.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #1, Outcome A

Initiative #2 (a): Review the requirements needed for the Federal Pell Grant program as currently administered, assess the resources available for improvement, and initiate changes that will make administration more effective and efficient while maintaining the service needs of student recipients

KPI: 100% of Pell Grant awards are administered with minimal or no initial error; all awards are correctly finalized

KPI: 100% of Pell Grants are posted to students' files within five workdays

KPI: At this time Pell Grant recipient volume exceeds that of 2008-09 by 834 students and the award volume has grown by over \$7 million

Initiative #2 (b): Administer the Federal ACG and SMART programs, incorporating program changes to remain responsibly compliant, and in a manner that best meets the needs of program recipients

KPI: 100% of ACG and SMART awards are administered with minimal or no initial error; all awards are correctly finalized

KPI: 95% or greater of ACG and SMART recipients were identified in a timely manner with their awards posted appropriately to their accounts within 48 hours of award eligibility information being identified and confirmed; all eligible recipients have been awarded

Initiative #2 (c): Contribute leadership in the effort to identify the new cohort of students to be invited to participate and in the monitoring the eligibility of second year cohort who will continue in the Gamecock Guarantee (GG) program

KPI: The 2009 cohort, which included 125 incoming freshmen students, was established

KPI: Eighty-six (86) of the original 2008 cohort of 93 students began the 2009-10 year

KPI: All 211 GG participants were awarded the \$2,500 base award dependent on their eligibility; those eligible for additional funding to meet tuition costs received appropriate funding. Two participants receive no program funding because of the dollar volume they receive from other programs. To date, \$520,194 has been distributed in 2009-10. A final accounting will be made after June 30.

Associated with this initiative, one measure of the success of the Gamecock Guarantee is the makeup of the financial aid that participants are receiving. The makeup of the aid for the 2008 cohort, which totaled \$1,612,655, was 85.33% gift aid (grants and scholarships) and 14.66% self-help (loans and work-study). The aid for the 2009 cohort totaled \$2,211,067; 96% being gift aid and only 4% self-help aid. It will be difficult to compare this data to the general population but it can easily be stated that the financial support and personal attention being given to GG participants is having a significant effect on the level of indebtedness they will face.

Goal #3: Administer Federal Work-Study in a manner that meets program compliance responsibilities, supports the University's employment administration, and best serves student FW-S award recipients

Analysis of Goal #3 Achievement: As of this report data reflecting FW-S earnings through the month of March is available. This information includes that annual program expenditures can be projected to total approximately \$1,600,000, exceeding budget projections at the beginning of the year but within our funding expenditure capabilities. Approximately 730 students have earned FW-S funding to date. Final expenditure information will be available after September 30

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #1, Outcome A

Initiative #3: Review the administration of the Federal Work-Study program for potential improvements in information and service being provided to employers and with impacts for student employees

KPI: An extensive addition to the office webpage provides information not only for employers to use in their administration of work-study but also to inform and advise students about the program. The major areas for employers include: general information, getting started in Federal Work-Study, employing work-study students, community service and America Reads, payroll procedures, and changing,

cancelling, and terminating work-study. This information is available at [www.sc.edu/financialaid](http://www.sc.edu/financialaid) under the student employment heading

Goal #4: Administer educational loan programs in a manner that best meets individual program compliance responsibilities, provides borrowers with guidance about program participation, assists borrowers with determining best what they need to meet the financial needs of the education being funded, and assists borrowers with debt management

Analysis of Goal #4 Achievement: As of this report, the OSFAS has administered federal, state, and privately funded educational loans totaling \$191,619,757. This amount already exceeds the volume of loans received by students and their parents in 2008-09 by over \$12 million. Final loan funding figures will be available soon after September 30.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #1, Outcome A

Initiative #4 (a): Develop and deliver updated procedures that take into account prior year lender selections for continuing borrowers while maintaining an ever-present option for lender selection by all borrowers

KPI: Provided relevant information to continuing borrowers through VIP and allowed them the choice of continuing with their prior lender or selecting a new lender. Provided new borrowers with the required information with which to select a lender. The selection process with its numerous options was automated for borrower utilization and completely compliant with new federal regulations

Initiative #4 (b): Convert policies, procedures and practices for Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program administration from providing a preferred/suggested lender list to providing a general and comprehensive list of lenders from whom borrowers can select

KPI: Implemented the notification requirements to borrowers required to adjust the institution from supporting a preferred lender list to disclosing the full list of lenders who provided recent service to our borrowers. Because of ongoing changes to lender information, continuous updates to published information and individualized notifications to borrowers has been accomplished.

**Associated with achieving these two KPI's, students and parents have borrowed approximately \$178 million in federally funded loans as of this report**

Initiative #4 (c): Continually review the known lender options for private educational loans

KPI: Required disclosure information associated with private educational loan programs and providers has been maintained for the benefit of those seeking this source of funding. To date, students have borrowed approximately \$11.8 million in private loans during

2009-10.

Goal #5: Investigate, plan, and provide leadership in the mainframe automation of federal grant Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) file processing and transmission.

Analysis of Goal #5 Achievement: After approximately nine months of investigation, planning, and collaboration with UTS staff, the mainframe automation of federal grant Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) file processing and transmission was tested and accomplished. Transmissions between the University and COD now run nightly. As of this report, the files of 4,680 grant recipients who are receiving over \$22 million in Pell, ACG, and SMART grant funding are being administered through the processes achieved through these efforts.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #3, Outcome B

Initiative #5: A comprehensive plan will be developed and provided to University Technology Services (UTS) personnel

KPI: Over the course of nine months COD specifications were extensively reviewed and a plan developed by three key members of the OSFAS staff; collaboration with UTS staff and a significant amount of programming was then accomplished. As a result, mainframe automation of COD processing and transmission has been accomplished for the administration of Federal Title IV Grant programs as of January 2010

Goal #6: Provide leadership in expanding the mainframe automation of Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) processing and transmission and plan for the conversion to Federal Direct Loan Program (DL) from the Federal Family Education Loan Program

Analysis of Goal #6 Achievement: The University announced its conversion to the Federal Direct Lending Program from the Federal Family Education Loan Program in December 2009. Building upon the efforts previously expended in achieving mainframe automation of federal grant COD administration, continued analysis, planning and collaboration is occurring. These efforts will ultimately enable the mainframe automation of the additional COD responsibilities associated with administering Federal Direct Lending. It is anticipated that the needed functionality for enabling mainframe administration of the approximately \$180 million of anticipated DL borrowing in 2010-11 will be completed in late spring/early summer.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #3, Outcome B

Initiative #6: A comprehensive plan for mainframe automation will be developed and provided to University Technology Services personnel

KPI: An extensive review of additional COD specifications associated with DL administration was performed. Communication with other DL schools to learn of their implementation experiences has occurred. Additional collaboration has also occurred with UTS staff. The progress toward the mainframe automation of DL COD administrative responsibilities continues as of this report. It is anticipated that the needed mainframe functionality to enable the successful

achievement of the administration of approximately \$180 million in Direct Loan borrowing in 2010-11 will be available within the upcoming months.

Goal #7: Complete planning for and provide leadership in the implementation of the TEACH Grant for 2009-10

Analysis of Goal #7 Achievement: As of this report, 42 students are receiving \$138,772 in TEACH Grants during 2009-10. That the number of recipients is small speaks positively of the efforts being put forth by both OSFAS and College of Education staff to ensure that inquiries are given the appropriate disclosures about TEACH. This information has resulted in many recognizing that this is not a program in which they want to participate. Preparation for initial institutional participation in this program extended over several months. Numerous inquiries regarding associated program administrative responsibilities with US Department of Education officials and colleagues from other schools were completed. Collaboration with College of Education staff has been very positive and administrative responsibilities are being shared. Program policies and procedures along with needed administrative forms and disclosures were prepared and are being utilized.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #1, Outcome A

Initiative #7 (a): Complete a review of all administrative guidance for this program and use it to develop program operations

KPI: The OSFAS policies and procedures for this program were prepared and include two information disclosure forms to be shared with those inquiring about the program and two forms to be completed when students wish to pursue program participation

Initiative #7 (b): Develop a process that in collaboration with the College of Education insures that all program requirements are met

KPI: The collaborative administrative relationship established with College of Education personnel is very positive and has been beneficial to both parties in responsibly administering the TEACH Grant. While there has been no tracking of the number of students who have declined participation once they understood the program participation requirements, it is the joint effort of the OSFAS and the College of Education that has insured program integrity for the University.

Initiative #7 (c): Collaborate with College of Education administration to implement program

KPI: As a result of the efforts of all involved, the TEACH Grant program has been actively implemented at the University of South Carolina with 42 recipients receiving over \$138,000 during this first year of its existence

Goal #8: Plan for and implement revised procedures for handling the student housing and meal allowance benefits provided to student employees of University housing

Analysis of Goal #8 Achievement: This goal was successfully completed through a collaborative effort of the OSFAS and University Housing. The result helps insure compliance in the treatment of benefits, both housing and meal allowances, that are provided to student employees in the residence halls. A thorough set of policies and procedures have been implemented and the communication necessary between Housing and the OSFAS has provided for the tracking and recognition of these benefits. Therefore, their impact on need-based aid is now being recognized. To date, a total of \$863,273 in benefits has been recognized. This amount is broken down into \$558,782 in undergraduate housing benefits to 280 students, \$108,899 in undergraduate board benefits to 192 students, \$194,504 in housing benefits to 25 graduate students, and \$1,088 in board benefits to two graduate students.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #2, Outcome G

Initiative #8 (a): Review current practices and interpreted requirements in order to formulate a compliant administrative plan

KPI: As a result of the collaborative efforts of the OSFAS and Housing, approximately 305 students' records now reflect \$863,273 in benefits that must be noted as a resource in meeting need according to federal regulation. Policies and procedures needed for administration were developed.

Goal #9: Review web page information for improvement opportunities

Analysis of Goal #9 Achievement: An extensive review of the office webpage was conducted with numerous updates and additions accomplished as a result of these efforts. The updates as noted in the following KPI's were areas that were identified as specifically providing necessary, expected, or highly supportive informational services to students and their families.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #4, Outcome E

Initiative #9: Provide new initiatives on the office webpage to improve information to and support of student and family needs and expectations

KPI: Checklists for incoming freshmen, incoming transfers, incoming graduate and professional students, and returning students designed to provide concise assistance in applying for aid, reviewing awards, and payment of fees were added to the front page of the office webpage. Website activity reports reflect that these checklists received a significant amount of traffic and suggest that this service opportunity has been widely utilized and appreciated. A checklist for summer 2010 aid applicants has also been made available.

KPI: Both a FAFSA tutorial and an instructional video were added to the office webpage. They can be accessed by going to [applying for financial aid](#) and then "start with the FAFSA". The tutorial is a linkage to the University of California - Santa Barbara; the video was prepared by FastWeb.

KPI: In order to enable students and parents attending the Orientation Financial Aid session to have "at home" access to the information and

materials provided during the presentation, it was posted to the office webpage. As this was material that was dated, it was subsequently removed from the webpage once the fall semester began. This effort has been updated for 2010 and will be made available during the Orientation timeframe again this summer.

KPI: In order to be compliant with the regulatory demands of having and making available a University Code of Conduct for Educational Loan Administration, the office's existing Code, originally prepared and posted before it had been required by federal regulation, was appropriately modified.

KPI: In order to provide students seeking assistance in identifying, pursuing, and utilizing non-institutional scholarships with more and better support, the scholarship information section of the office webpage was updated. Scholarship search engines were improved or added. Significant resource opportunities that other University students have received were listed and linked. Information on how best to communicate with the University to ensure timely availability of non-institutional resources for fees payment was updated.

KPI: In order to keep student and parent borrowers abreast of changes and requirements associated with educational loans, related information on the office webpage is continuously reviewed, edited, added to, or updated.

Goal #10: Review the services being provided by the OSFAS during Orientation

Analysis of Goal #10 Achievement: Because of ever increasing demands on and competition for staff time, a review of OSFAS services provided to families during Orientation was undertaken. As a result of that review, it was determined that the expectations of attendees were common enough that a very responsible and service-oriented group session could maintain the level of service provided in past years. Group presentations have generally improved the overall information provided by ensuring that all families are hearing a common presentation that will likely cover more than they might ask on their own. Over 1,000 family units participated in the 2009 OSFAS Orientation presentation, that number consistent with 2008 and up 10% or more from the five preceding years. Further efforts to both tie the presentation more closely to that of the Student Accounts Office and to update/refine the OSFAS presentation based on ongoing experience of family expectations is being accomplished at this time.

Link: Contributes to Division Goal #3, Outcome B

Initiative #10: Assess the OSFAS services being provided during Orientation and determine a delivery means that will maintain the quality provided in years past while not tying up the entire staff every afternoon for individual family visits

KPI: A group presentation was developed and delivered to over 1,000 family units. The group format allowed for a broader presentation of commonly requested information to all attendees and was structured so that individualized questions could be asked. Participants were provided an exercise that walked them through the determination of their charges, how much they would owe after they applied their

financial aid to their bill, and direct links to potentially available resources if they were still facing a need for additional support.

**Associated with the achievement of these goals, the OSFAS has received 44,815 applications for 2009-10. Need based applicants total 34,560, non-need applicants total 10,255. Approximately 24,500 students have received approximately \$350 million. A final accounting of applicants, awards, and award recipients will be made after September 30.**