Note from the Executive Director:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the 2017 Student Affairs Department Annual Report. During the 2016-2017 academic year, the University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid implemented many changes to our internal processes to increase efficiencies and effectiveness of our deliverables to the University of Utah and the population of students that we serve.

Included as an attachment is the most current copy of our organizational chart for review.

**Key Activities, Accomplishments and Staff Excellence**

1. **Key Activities**
   a. Support class shaping and enrollment management efforts
   b. Department customer service
   c. Seamless navigation and Student campus experience

**Goals**

a. **Support class shaping and enrollment management efforts**
   1. **Goal**: Increase percentage and number of FAFSA applications submitted by students: Entering Freshman, Entering Transfer and Overall
      a. Desired outcome: When applying to college, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid encourage students to complete the FAFSA. This demonstrates an individual’s financial need against their cost of attendance. With a completed FAFSA, colleges and universities are able to identify eligible federal aid, such as loans and grants, as well as assess a student’s eligibility for need-based scholarships. For many students, college isn’t possible without federal aid. In the 2015-2016 academic year, 30-34% (source: US Department of Education) of high school graduates on the Wasatch Front completed the FAFSA. For the 2016-2017 academic year, the percentage increased to 35-39%. The University of Utah has met the goal to increase the number of...
students completing the FAFSA and reducing the financial barrier to attend college.

b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid has completed 121 outreach events to current students, prospective students, and campus partners educating them on the FAFSA application and the benefits on completing the application for maximum financial aid opportunities to cover the cost of attending the University of Utah. Data shows there was an increase in overall applications processed for students to attend for the 2016-2017 academic year.

c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAFSA Applications</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27,018</td>
<td>27,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>20,937</td>
<td>20,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Freshman</td>
<td>2,421</td>
<td>1,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Transfer</td>
<td>1,749</td>
<td>2,749</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Goal: Increase number of first generation students that submit the FAFSA application
a. Desired outcome: Research indicates that first generation college students are the least likely to complete the FAFSA even though they are the most likely to need financial aid (source: US Department of Education). The goal is to increase the knowledge about the financial aid process while providing access to completing the FAFSA. Ultimately, to reduce the barrier of finances in order to have access to higher education and a college degree.

b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? The data shows a 1% decrease, 81 students, in first generation students completed the FAFSA and attended the University of Utah.

c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Gen FAFSA Applications</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,914</td>
<td>7,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>6,411</td>
<td>6,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Freshman</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Transfer</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>534</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![1st Generation FAFSA Applications Chart]
3. Goal: Increase the number of Pell recipients submitted by undergraduate students: Entering Freshman, Entering Transfer and Overall
   
a. Desired outcome: Pell grant recipients are guaranteed aid. The amount of aid is determined by their financial need, enrollment level and educational cost. Once the FAFSA application is completed and processed by the Department of Education, the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is determined. The EFC is calculated by using federal methodology formulas that are mandated by Congress. The formulas, which are applied consistently to all applicants, takes into consideration such indicators as financial strength, assets, and family size. By increasing the number of students completing the FAFSA application, our goal is to proportionately increase the number of Pell recipients and in turn access to higher education and a college degree.

b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid did not see an increase in the number of Pell recipients enrolled for the 2016-2017 academic year. There was an overall 4% decrease in Pell eligible students. The Pell eligible EFC range is 0-5234.

c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pell Grant Eligible FAFSA Applications</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11,447</td>
<td>11,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>10,011</td>
<td>9,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Freshman</td>
<td>3,056</td>
<td>3,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Transfer</td>
<td>2,436</td>
<td>2,217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Goal: Increase the number of need based recipients by undergraduate students: Entering Freshman, Entering Transfer and Overall

   a. Desired outcome: In order to be eligible for need based aid, a student must complete the FAFSA application. Financial need is determined by the Cost of Attendance minus the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Cost of Attendance takes into consideration, but is not limited to, tuition, fees, room and board, transportation, and books. Generally speaking, the Lower the EFC, the greater demonstrated financial need a student has. Need based aid does not take into consideration academic test scores or academic rigor.

   b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid did not see increased need based FAFSA applications on all levels for undergraduate students for the 2016-2017 academic year. There was a slight increase in need based FAFSA applications for the 2016-2017 academic year for entering freshman students.

Data showed that the entering freshman class had an average EFC of 30,132 in 2015-2016 and 33,121 in 2016-2017. The median EFC was 15,043 and 17,670 respectively.
c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need Based Eligible FAFSA Applications</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20,930</td>
<td>20,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>15,270</td>
<td>14,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Freshman</td>
<td>1,664</td>
<td>1,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Transfer</td>
<td>1,449</td>
<td>1,370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need Based Eligible Entering Freshman FAFSA Applications</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average EFC</td>
<td>30,132</td>
<td>33,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median EFC</td>
<td>15,043</td>
<td>17,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Goal: select recipients and award both institutional and endowed funds (Freshman and Transfer, merit and need based) in order to strategically leverage scholarship dollars

a. Desired outcome: By leveraging prior year enrollment data on scholarship yield rates along with scholarship acceptances and corresponding enrollment rates, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid hopes to assist with an increase in the overall scholarship offers and acceptances to targeted university enrollment initiatives.
b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? Merit scholarship offers were mailed to students within one week of the Offer of Admissions being mailed to entering Freshman and Transfer students. Awards were reassessed when students updated their residency reclassification, if needed. Returning students were evaluated for renewal eligibility shortly after Spring and Summer grades respectively were posted to determine if they met the renewal criteria for the awards. A communication plan was implemented to remind students about the need to accept their scholarship offers so processing could be completed in a timely manner. The communication plan included social media, emails, and telephone calls.

c. Data to support your outcomes

Entering Freshman and Transfer scholarship awards for 2016-2017

- Based on students offered a scholarship and had a test score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entering Freshman</th>
<th>Entering Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Res</td>
<td>Non-Res</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Scholar Offered</td>
<td>4862</td>
<td>3041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Scholar Accept</td>
<td>1733</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean GPA/ACT</td>
<td>3.816/26.44</td>
<td>3.723/29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median GPA/ACT</td>
<td>3.880/26</td>
<td>3.810/29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of GPAs</td>
<td>2.71-4.0</td>
<td>2.79-4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Renewal awards for Freshman and Transfer students for 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freshman Renewal</th>
<th>Transfer Renewal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Res</td>
<td>Non-Res</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Scholar Offered</td>
<td>4941</td>
<td>1455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Scholar Accept</td>
<td>2849</td>
<td>833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean GPA/ACT</td>
<td>3.611/ NA</td>
<td>3.498/ NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median GPA/ACT</td>
<td>3.767/ NA</td>
<td>3.766/ NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of GPAs</td>
<td>2.01-4.0</td>
<td>3.143-4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combined awards for both populations for 2016-2017

*based on students offered a scholarship and had a test score
d. Department Customer Service

1. Goal: Increase student-customer satisfaction

   a) Desired outcome: In Spring 2015, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid began providing walk-in appointments for students to meet with a financial aid counselor year round. The intent of this was to reduce the amount of time a student had to wait to be seen by a counselor and to provide them with in-depth counseling to answer all their questions. Prior to this time, students had to schedule an appointment with a counselor.

   b) How these outcomes have been achieved or modified? During the 2016-2017 academic year, 7,171 students came in on a walk-in basis and met with a financial aid counselor. The open walk-in schedule increased the amount of contact with students and reduced the amount of wait times to be seen and have their questions responded to.

c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Students seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>425 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>1234 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>642 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>409 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>381 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>249 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>952 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>418 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>537 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>659 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2017</td>
<td>607 students seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2017</td>
<td>658 students seen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Goal: Improve the effectiveness of student counseling sessions

a. Desired outcome: In the Spring of 2015, the Office of Scholarships and Financial reorganized the Counseling area to prepare for the change to walk-in appointments. The staff was divided into two areas: Customer Service Counselors and Processing Counselors. These titles represent to primary responsibility of the counselor with the secondary responsibility being the other category of counselor. This change to the counselor responsibilities allowed the focus on the students’ needs while maintaining an acceptable level of processing turnaround. The Scholarship area also has devoted individuals to counseling students on a walk in basis.

b. How these outcomes have been achieved or modified?

For the Fall 2016 start, 908 students were seen by counselors the first two weeks prior to the start of the semester. And for the Spring 2017 semester, 440 students were seen by counselors. This meant the student had actual face-to-face time with a counselor to get their concerns addressed. While the office saw an increase in the overall customer service level from the previous year of students making appointments, the office still has a need to increase additional efficiencies in this area to improve the overall customer service experience. The modified plan for the 2017-2018 academic year will be discussed in the Opportunities section later in the report.

c. Data to support your outcomes.

The Office keeps an electronic google shared document to track the students that come into the office and the concerns they are here to discuss.

In January 2017, the following was a breakdown of the students’ concerns that met face-to-face with a counselor for the entire month:

32% FAFSA questions
16% loan questions
16% general questions
16% appeals/petition questions
12% random questions
8% verification questions

3. Goal: UHEAA Default Prevention

a. Desired outcome: The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid partnered with UHEAA (Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority) to communicate and provide resources to our students who are getting ready to go into repayment of their student loans and/or are delinquent on their student loans. The program provides financial aid literacy, loan repayment assistance, and default prevention services to students.

UHEAA is a Utah state government agency and part of the Utah System of Higher Education. It acts under authority delegated by the Utah State Board of Regents and is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors and Utah’s Commission of Higher education.

b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? During the past year, UHEAA made 13,617 telephone calls, 11,002 text messages, and sent 31,740 email messages to students that were 90-269 days delinquent on their student loans. UHEAA made 4,136 telephone calls, 1,771 text messages, and sent 4,959 emails to students that were 270+ days delinquent on their student loans. This volume in all three areas is an increase in activity that was seen for the previous year.

The University of Utah is well below the national 4 year public school default rate. In addition, The University of Utah is also below the State of Utah default rate.

c. Data to support your outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National 4 yr Public</td>
<td>7.5 %</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Goal: Walk in, same day appointments with counselors
   a. Desired outcome: Over the past years, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid had provided walk-in appointments so students can meet with counselors in person. This was done with an effort to increase the overall customer service level provided to our students, parents, and campus partners. This past year we reframed our messaging at the door entrance of the office and told people that we had counselors working our windows to improve overall time of meeting with a counselor. We also increased the number of windows open from 2 to 4 windows at peak processing times.

   b. How have the outcomes been achieved or modified? This is the second year of the program being in existence. We continue to monitor the best way to provide timely customer service to our students as the number of students applying for financial aid continues to increase. We have gone from students making appointments with our office, to having walk in appointments and signing in to see a counselor, to having counselors work our walk up windows and provide on the spot counseling. The later has produced the most increased counseling to our students with the least amount of wait time to be seen.

   c. Data to support your outcomes. The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid keeps an excel spreadsheet of the students that are seen by counselors. According to the spreadsheet, 7171 students were seen by Counselors during the 2016-2017 academic year. This is an increase of over 1000 students from the previous academic year.

5. Goal: Support departmental awarding of scholarships by providing access to information, training, and working closely with our department contacts

   a. Desired outcome. The Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid strives to build relationships and improve departmental perception of central administration with our campus partners by providing
excellent customer service to effective use the new Scholarship Administration system.

b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? This is the third year that Scholarship Administration has been in place. In the 2014-2015 academic year over $17.7 million was disbursed through the system as compared to $24.2 million in the 2015-2016 academic year, and in the 2016-2017 academic year $34.1 million. We have doubled the amount of aid being reported in Scholarship Administration in three years. This is significant progress and can be contributed to the improved campus partner relationships being made across campus.

c. Data to support your outcomes

The awards recorded (788 item types) are the awards disbursed through accounts payable, housing, bookstore, etc.

6. Goal: Continued outreach to departments and provide training to effectively utilize the scholarship administration system.
a. Desired outcome. The University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid continue to provide outreach and trainings to campus partners about the Scholarship Administration system. Campus partners often call in to the office with specific questions about an individual student or fund. Group trainings are also provided to educate campus partners about the increased information that can be obtained through using the software.

The Office is in the process of automating the Scholarship Administration training component and incorporating the course onto Canvas. This will allow campus partners to view the training multiple times to refresh themselves with the process of posting awards.

b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? Yes. Every year since the inception of Scholarship Administration, we have seen an increase in users and organizations using Scholarship Administration to process awards to students. For the 2014-2015 academic year, 195 departments processed transactions using the Scholarship Administration system; for 2015-2016, 434 departments processed transactions; and for the 2016-2017 academic year, 567 departments processed transactions in Scholarship Administration. Individual people that had access to the system also increased from 350, to 449, to 459 respectively for the years as well. All users had to receive training prior to being given access to the system.

c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarship Administration Users (as of June 30, 2017)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orgs with Users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This does not include staff from the University Office of Scholarships of Financial Aid.

c. Seamless Navigation and Student Campus Experience
   1. Goal: Increase the use of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool
a. Desired outcome: The IRS Date Retrieval Tool has been in place since the 2009-2010 academic year. The Tool allows students that have already filed their federal income tax return to prefill the answers to some questions when they are completing the FAFSA application. By using the Tool, families save some time when completing the FAFSA application and also reduce the likelihood of being selected for verification.

Not everyone can use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool. Students and parents must have a Social Security Number and a FSA ID to use the Tool. The student, and parent if needed, will need to authenticate themselves to the IRS in order to use the Tool.

This past year, the IRS took down the IRS Data Retrieval Tool due to suspected fraud on March 9, 2017. Students that waited to complete the FAFSA application on or after this date had to use the original paper and tax return method to complete the FAFSA application. This caused much concern in the Financial Aid community about the access students had to completing the application for financial aid in a timely manner. The Tool did not come back up for the remainder of the academic year.

b. How these outcomes have been achieved or modified? Even with the IRS Data Retrieval Tool going down on March 9, 2017, we saw an increase in the number of students completing the FAFSA application and using this tool. This increased the timeliness of application processing for these students.

c. Data to support your outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRS DRT Tool FAFSA Applications</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10289</td>
<td>10304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>8384</td>
<td>8507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Freshman</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Transfer</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Goal: Direct Deposit sign up on the award letter

   a. Desired outcome: The University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid encourages students to sign up for direct deposit for their financial aid refund checks. Financial aid refunds are generated when a student has excess financial aid after their university charges have been paid in full for a semester. This initiative has been in place for three academic years.

   b. How have these outcomes been achieved or modified? While the number appears to have gone down from the previous academic year, the results of this initiative have been positive. Since inception, over 14,800 students have signed up for the direct deposit option from their financial aid award letter.

   c. Data to support your outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5758</td>
<td>4358</td>
<td>4152</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Utilization Data**

Please provide the data you have to show who is utilizing these programs or services and address the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Federal and State Grants</th>
<th>University Scholarships and Grants</th>
<th>Work Study</th>
<th>Federal Loans</th>
<th>Alternative Loans</th>
<th>Institutional Loans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>$29,444,632</td>
<td>$96,064,978</td>
<td>$1,163,069</td>
<td>$146,764,815</td>
<td>$10,103,687</td>
<td>$512,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>$31,214,118</td>
<td>$89,209,208</td>
<td>$1,196,280</td>
<td>$142,223,650</td>
<td>$8,522,382</td>
<td>$487,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>$34,052,565</td>
<td>$78,162,189</td>
<td>$1,388,181</td>
<td>$138,697,853</td>
<td>$8,779,788</td>
<td>$477,357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following figures are individual counts of students that received aid in the respective areas for the 2016-2017 academic year:

1. Count 20,016

2. Career
   Dental 96
Graduate  4090
Law  269
Medical 394
Undergraduate 15,167

3. Year in school at beginning of academic year
   Freshman = 2892
   Sophomore= 2672
   Junior = 3436
   Senior = 5808
   5th Yr Senior = 355
   Masters = 2278
   Doctorate = 1812
   Dental 1 =41
   Dental 2 = 22
   Dental 3 = 17
   Dental 4= 15
   Law 1 = 89
   Law 2 = 80
   Law 3 = 101
   LWL = 1
   Med 1= 118
   Med 2 = 105
   Med 3 = 91
   Med 4 = 83

4. Gender
   Female: 9561
   Male: 10152
   Unknown: 303

   American Indian/Alaska Native:  328
   Asian: 2117
   Black/ African American: 453
   Hispanic/ Latino: 2397
   Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander: 218
   Other: 10

6. Veteran status: 42
II. Plan for the future:

You are experts in your area. There may be national trends or changes within the system that will impact you. How are you planning?

a. Anticipated challenges

Reframing Walk –In Communication with Students (both an opportunity and a challenge). The Office has three entry points that a student can enter to receive customer service for the Office. The three entry points are, the front service windows, the door into the financial aid office, and the door into the scholarship office. By having three entry points, it creates a challenge to provide good customer service in a timely manner to the student population.

The Office redirected traffic to the front service windows for the first two weeks of the Fall 2017 semester as a test case to determine if all questions could be managed from one central location. In doing so, we had to re-examine who was working the front service windows so we could optimize the customer service experience. It was decided to have Counselors work the customer service windows so that Advisors could answer the telephone calls, respond to emails, and complete verification on files for federal financial aid.

During the first two weeks of the Fall semester, 2680 students were spoken with at the front service windows with an average wait time of 8-10 minutes. This is in comparison to 807 students that came into the financial aid office door after speaking with an Advisor at the front service windows initially in the 2016-2017 academic year.

By redirecting the students to the front service windows and keeping all 4 windows open instead of the normal 2-3 windows, the office was able to speak with students and address their needs much faster. The detailed or complicated issues were still brought back to a counselor to be discussed in more detail in an office environment.
The financial aid door was never locked during this time. If a student by chance came in through the financial aid door, the Office still followed protocol and met with the student to discuss their concerns.

Financial aid counselors met with 299 students face to face during the first two weeks of the Fall semester. During the same period of time for the previous 2015-2016 year, 435 students were seen in a counselor office. This represents a 45% decrease in traffic that then lead to increased productivity for processing student’s applications for financial aid.

While the average wait time in the line to be seen at the front service windows was 8-10 minutes, there were times that it did reach 20-30 minutes. This was during peak times of the day. Students seemed to understand this when they saw that all 4 windows were open and staff was available to answer their concerns.

With the success of this format during the first two weeks of the Fall 2017 semester, we have continued to implement this format after that time period. We will continue to review the average wait time and look for possible solutions to help alleviate the additional time.

**PPY/ Early FAFSA (both and opportunity and a challenge).** On September 14, 2015, President Obama announced two major changes to the FAFSA process. For the 2017-2018 academic year, the FAFSA application was available to be completed on October 1, 2016. This is a change from previous years when the FAFSA application opened on January 1. The second change is that FAFSA income information will be from one tax year earlier- the prior prior year tax information will be collected. This means the 2017-2018 FAFSA will collect tax year 2015 income information and not 2016 information. Most students will now be able to complete the FAFSA application from an already completed tax return. This in turn will allow most students to electronically transfer their income tax return information from the IRS on to the FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.

The hope is that more students will complete the FAFSA application as they begin applying for college admissions. This will allow students and families to make a more informed financial decision on the choice of college they attend for the Fall 2017 semester. Current students will be able to make more informed financial decisions about their education as they pursue their college degree.

The University of Utah developed a communication plan that included the entire Student Affairs division to share this new information with current students, prospective students, and various campus partners. The was implemented in late
Spring 2016 to notify our campus partners and students of the upcoming changes to the FAFSA process. The increase in the number of students completing a FAFSA has been tremendous. The Office will review the communication it had in place for the previous academic year to determine where additional tweaks can be made for improved communication.

The Office will need to review internal process and procedures that were in place for the previous academic year and develop a plan for improved processing efficiencies. Workloads will need to be examined to determine we are using all available resources to their best potential.

**IRS Data Retrieval Tool.** The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) went live on October 1, 2016, for the 2016-2017 FAFSA cycle. The DRT was created by the IRS and the Department of Education. The DRT allows students and parents to merge their tax information directly from the IRS website onto the FAFSA application. This was the Department of Education’s preferred method to enter tax information on the FAFSA because it would lessen the room for error when filling out the FAFSA application.

This also helped with the verification process. If the DRT was used to complete the FAFSA, processing time was reduced significantly for the students and the Financial Aid Office. If the student could not use the DRT when completing the FAFSA, the student and possibly parents would have to order a tax return transcript through the IRS website, which could delay the verification process.

Verification verbiage for our internal checklists and verification documents was in place to help students navigate the verification process. When speaking to students on the phone, at the windows and via email; communication was given to students and constituents to use the DRT.

In March of 2017, the IRS made the decision to disable the DRT because they had come to the conclusion as a “precautionary step following concerns that personal information could be taken as used by thieves.” This made things strenuous in the office as we had communicated in presentations, orientations and daily activities to use the DRT. The Office immediately removed the text from our internal checklists, from the verification documents, from the website and any other place that might mislead the student and quickly started to guide students to order a tax return transcript.

Due to the removal of the DRT, all students had to use their actual 1040 forms to fill out the FAFSA application. This allowed room for human error. Also, when the students were selected for verification they were now required to request a tax return
transcript from the IRS. Due to the breach in the IRS system requesting an online copy of your tax return transcript was troublesome. The IRS wanted individuals to have their cell phone number in their name and a major credit card, auto loan number or mortgage loan number. With many students not having one or both, they had to request the tax return transcript by mail which took 5-10 days to get to them. In return, this slowed and delayed the verification process for students.

However, with the difficulties made by the disablement of the DRT, the Office was able to turn around communication and help the students navigate websites to request the tax return transcript so staff could quickly and efficiently process their verification checklists.

The DRT will return for the 2018-2019 FAFSA form on October 1, 2017 with additional security and privacy protections added. The tax return information will not be displayed on the DRT web page or on the FAFSA form. Students and parents will need to trust that the information is correct in the DRT transfer process between the IRS and the Department of Education.

**Comment Code 399.** With the opening of the 2017-2018 FAFSA, the Department of Education decided to also implement PPY (discussed earlier in the report). The decision was made because the Department of Education statistically saw that students and parents were marking will file or will not file on the FAFSA and then using estimated numbers. However, at the end of the tax filing year used to complete the FAFSA, the Dept. of Education would receive information from the IRS which would show that a large number of students that stated they would not file did and for the ones that said will file, the estimated numbers were very different.

This put the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 aid years in a unique situation of using the 2015 tax year for two years of reporting. To make sure the tax information matched for both years, the Department of Education created a comment code 399.

When an institution loads the 2017-2018 FAFSA and the application had the comment code 399, the institution is required to review the two FAFSA applications, find the discrepancies and resolve the conflict. Once the comment code 399 is received by the institution, the student can no longer receive financial aid and the student can no longer receive future disbursements until the conflicting information is resolved. If the student never resolves the conflicting information, their federal need based 2016-2017 financial aid will be canceled.

This has been a challenge to the Office and the financial aid community in general. The Office made sure checklists were placed on the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 file to
ensure that no further disbursements for 2016-2017 until the conflicting information could be resolved. The Office also had to make sure there were procedures in place to make sure the office was reviewing the FAFSA applications correctly. By reviewing the FAFSA applications correctly, staff were able to find the discrepancies in information, flag the file for the additional documentation needed to resolve the conflicting issue and communicate the information needed to the student.

The deadline to complete all conflicting information for the 2016-2017 year was September 9, 2017. If the student did not resolve the conflict by this date, the student would no longer be eligible for their 2016-2017 federal need based financial aid and funds could potentially be returned on behalf of the student causing an institutional debt to be created.


The Extension Act establishes new eligibility requirements for undergraduate and graduate students to receive Perkins Loans. Guidance is provided on which undergraduate and graduate students would now be eligible to receive Perkins Loans through September 30, 2017. The Extension Act also clarifies which students would be eligible for subsequent disbursement of Perkins Loan funds.

The Federal Perkins Loan Extension Act prohibits further extensions of the Perkins Loan Program under section 422 (a) of the General Education Provisions Act on or after October 1, 2017. Subsequent disbursements of a loan first disbursed to an eligible student after June 30, 2017, and before October 1, 2017, are allowed.

The cancellation of the Federal Perkins Loan Program will have an impact on aid programs that a student could be packaged with in order to finance their education. This information will need to be communicated to students so that additional financial aid options can be considered in a timely manner. The Office is putting together a detailed communication plan to let students know they must accept their Perkins loans prior to September 29, 2017 in order to be eligible for the funds for the 2017-2018 academic year. No additional Perkins loan awards can be accepted after this date.

The cancellation of the program will also have a financial effect on the University in general. Section 466(c ) of the Higher Education Act requires institutions to return to the Department of Education the Federal share of any excess Liquid Capital (ELC)
from the institution’s Federal Perkins Loan Revolving Fund. ELC is the amount of the revolving Fund’s “Cash on Hand” that is in excess of the institution’s estimated immediate needs for the Federal Perkins Loan Program.

The Department of education will be delaying the 2017-2018 ELC notification and collection process until after the eCampus- Based System transition is completed. Institutions will be notified about the process for requesting an adjustment and returning the Federal share in early 2018.

b. **Anticipated opportunities**

**Implementation of Year Round Pell Grants.** Section 401(b)(8) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), as added by Section 310 of the Department of Education Appropriations act, 2017 (Title III of Division H of P.L. 115-31, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017), allows a student to receive Federal Pell grant funds for up to 150 percent of the student’s Pell grant Scheduled Award for an award year. This provision will begin with the 2017-2018 academic year.

To be eligible for the additional Pell grant funds, the student must meet all eligibility criteria to receive the funds and be enrolled at least half time in accordance with 34 CFR 668.2 (b). This could mean that a student would have three semesters of full time Pell grant eligibility verses the two semesters they have had in the past. This additional financial resource could assist the University in reaching the enrollment initiatives currently in place for the 2017-2018 academic year.

**OnBase.** OnBase is an enterprise content management solution software. The University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid purchased the Outcome Based Solution Verification Document in early 2016 and implemented it for the 2017-2018 academic year. The solution uses automated process tools to enable institutions to quickly process high volumes of verification records. Once the Office is fully trained with the solution, we will be able to make improvements to our processing and maximize productivity.

**DocuSign.** The Office also purchasing electronic document signature software this past year. The Office is currently implementing work flows to have all of our work that requires a signature to be processed electronically through this software. Students and parents will be able to complete verification forms electronically and submit them to our office. This will increase the timing that our office receives verification documents to be reviewed. The Office can also resend documents to a student
through the Docusign system if documents are not received in a timely manner. The Office will be able to track the flow and timing of documents through the process.

Docusign will assist with providing more seamless navigation for students and parents with the financial aid process. This ultimately should increase the customer service level expectations for the Office.

**AcademicWorks.** The AcademicWorks scholarship management platform is software designed to provide students with a central place for applying for university scholarships. The University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid is in the process of rolling out the software university wide.

For the 2016-2017 academic year, the David Eccles School of Business was the first school at the University of Utah to adopt the AcademicWorks system. They started the year with over 300 scholarships being managed through the AcademicWorks platform. The David Eccles School of Business was selected as a test case due to the high number of scholarships that they award to students.

Professional guidance from AcademicWorks suggested that implementation at a school our size be slow and deliberate to ensure success. The recommendation is to onboard 4 to 6 departments or colleges each semester. Implementation is expected to take two years, in order to allow the 18 colleges and 100 academic departments time to adapt and implement the system. In fall 2016, several colleges and departments began the process of onboarding onto the system. As of June 20, 2017, AcademicWorks has been implemented in the David Eccles School of Business, the College of Social Work, the College of Science and the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences.

By June 30, 2017 there were 513 scholarship opportunities being managed through the system. There were 2,370 applications submitted for these opportunities, with over 800 student awards being managed through the system.

Implementation has begun for the College of Nursing, College of Education and the College of Fine Arts. The Center for Ethnic Student Affairs is also bringing their scholarship opportunities onto the platform. Use will continue to rise as more colleges and academic departments onboard.

a. Any grants or contacts you have received and it how compares to the previous year

The Utah System of Higher Education Office of Outreach and Access had applications for the Affordable Participation and Timely Completion Grant Programs
for the fiscal year 2017. The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid submitted a
grant proposal for the FAFSA Awareness Campaign for the 2016-2017 academic
year. Our goal was to increase the FAFSA completion rate by 3% along the Wasatch
Front during the 2017-2018 financial aid cycle.

The Office was chosen as a recipient of the grant fund in the amount of $18,500.
These funds were used to educate the importance of the FAFSA and how it will help
make college education possible. It also assisted with outreach events to assist in the
completion of the FAFSA application. This was the first time our Office had received
this type of funding to promote the awareness of the overall financial aid process.

With the goal of increasing the FAFSA completion rate along the Wasatch Front from
the 30-34 percentile range to the 35-39 percentile range during the 2016-2017 aid
year, our primary instrument of data analysis and assessment is the Department of
Education data on FAFSAs filed. With the 16-17 aid cycle’s change of open date from
January to October, the additional three months gives colleges and universities a
greater bandwidth to promote the FAFSA and encourage prospective and students to
maximize their aid options.

In the 2015-2016 academic year, 30-34% (source: US Department of Education) of
high school graduates on the Wasatch Front completed the FAFSA. For the 2016-
2017 academic year, the percentage increased to 35-39%. We will continue to work
to improve on measures implemented as a result of receiving this grant in hopes to
continue to improve the rates of students completing the FAFSA application and
being able to maximize financial aid resources to obtain a college degree.

Estimated numbers of people who participated in grant related activities or who
received services from the grant include the following numbers:
These conservative numbers do not include the prospective/current students and parents served in our office. During the USHE grant cycle, we have seen a 46% increase in appointments, from 4,632 unique appointments (July 1, 2015 thru June 30, 2016) to 6,785 unique appointments (July 1, 2016 thru June 14, 2017). We believe this is a direct result of greater outreach into high schools, with new student orientations, FAFSA campaigns, etc. These unique appointments also do not reflect increases in telephone calls, assistance offered via our walk-up window, or assistance offered by the scholarship team.

** This number reflects attendees at high school counselor-specific events, and does not include those who engage with the University of Utah at high school events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Current students</td>
<td>1,090*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Prospective students (who have never attended your institution)</td>
<td>4,790*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Parents</td>
<td>1,775*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Students who left the institution but whom you are recruiting back</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Institutional personnel (e.g., faculty, advisors, administrators)</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Personnel outside the institution (e.g., public education counselors, workforce colleagues); please specify.</td>
<td>270**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of people reached: (A+B+C+D+E+F)</td>
<td>8,035*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These conservative numbers do not include the prospective/current students and parents served in our office. During the USHE grant cycle, we have seen a 46% increase in appointments, from 4,632 unique appointments (July 1, 2015 thru June 30, 2016) to 6,785 unique appointments (July 1, 2016 thru June 14, 2017). We believe this is a direct result of greater outreach into high schools, with new student orientations, FAFSA campaigns, etc. These unique appointments also do not reflect increases in telephone calls, assistance offered via our walk-up window, or assistance offered by the scholarship team.

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III.
Staff Excellence
Please highlight the great people in your department. Please address the following to the best of your ability. If you do not have any information to share under these headings, please indicate this.

a. Professionalism

Canned food drive for Christmas: 1369 individual cans of food were donated to a local food pantry
Customer Service Projects: The service project our department participated in was with the Bennion Center. The projects included salutations to soldiers where staff created cards for those who are serving in our military. The other project was knitting looms that were provided to new born babies at primary hospital.

Individual staff professional development:

Jennifer Berry- Alliance conference, 2017
Shanon Brown- Completed Cash Management Course by NASFAA
Shanon Brown- Authentic Self Care & Community Healing (Division of EM)
Shanon Brown- Understanding Behavioral Intervention & Creating a Culture of Care (Divison of Student Affairs)
Brenda Burke- NASFAA conference 2016
Brenda Burke- Noel Levitz conference, 2016
Brenda Burke- campus visit to Incheon, S Korea, 2016
Brenda Burke- COSUAA conference, 2017
Brenda Burke- NASFAA conference, 2017
Krista Burton- RMASFAA conference, 2016
Ashley Carter- FAFSA Committee, 2016 and 2017
Ashley Carter- Training Committee, 2016 and 2017
Ashley Carter- Celebration Committee, 2016 and 2017
Ashley Carter- My Culture Isn't Your Costume (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Ashley Carter- Authentic Self Care & Community Healing (Division of EM)
Ashley Carter- Celebrations of Professionals of African American Descent
Ryan Christensen- FSA conference, 2016
Marc Gangwer- FSA conference, 2016
Angela Goodman- RMASFAA Summer Institute, 2017
Angela Goodman- FAFSA Committee, 2017
Angela Goodman- Alternative Breaks with the Bennion Center, 2017
Hilerie Harris- Anti-Racist Doesn’t Mean Anti-White (Division of Stu Affairs)
Hilerie Harris- Authentic Self Care & Community Healing (Division of EM)
Hilerie Harris- UAAC Marketing Committee
Hilerie Harris- Enrollment Management Marketing Committee
Hilerie Harris- FAFSA Committee, 2016 and 2017
Karen Henriquez- NASFAA Leadership Conference, 2017
Emelie Hereth- UOSFA Training committee, 2017
Emelie Hereth- FAFSA committee, 2017
Emelie Hereth- completed Cash Management Course by NASFAA
Jonathon Leon- Block U Picture, Volunteer
Linh Ly - Most Spirited Employee award 2017 (voted on by her colleagues)
Maria Mills - RMASFAA Summer Institute, 2017
Chuck Masoka - 2016 Utah NASPA Region V Conference
Chuck Masoka - 2017 NASPA Assessment & Persistence Conference Presenter
Chuck Masoka - Member of the Student Affairs Diversity Council
Chuck Masoka - Multiple Webinars for Symplicity CSM
Chuck Masoka - Multiple Online Trainings for AcademicWorks
Chuck Masoka - Career Services 2016 Questival Champion
Matthew Plooster - FAFSA committee, 2017
Matthew Plooster - U Grant Writing Collaborative Taskforce, 2017
Matthew Plooster - Student Affairs Diversity Council, 2017
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Where do our graduates go? First Destination Findings’ (AER)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Life at the Utah Asia Campus’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Queering Sanctuary Spaces: The Promise and Limits of Safe Spaces’ (Office of Equity and Diversity)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Undocumented: Latinx, Chicanx Students & Activism’ (Office of Equity and Diversity)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘My Culture Isn’t Your Costume’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Unconscious Bias’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Campus Climate in the Post-Election Era’ (NASPA)
Matthew Plooster - attended Coffee Hour: Fall 2016 Enrollment Campaign Report (Assessment, Evaluation, and Research)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Anti-Racism Doesn’t Mean Anti-White’ (Division of Student Affairs)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Authentic Self Care & Community Healing’ (Division of Student Affairs)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Understanding Behavioral Intervention and Creating a Culture of Care’ (Division of Student Affairs)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘How to Support Student Survivors of Sexual Assault’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Student Access and Ability’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Matthew Plooster - attended Coffee Hour: National Survey of Student Engagement (Assessment, Evaluation, and Research)
Matthew Plooster - attended ‘Serving Low-Income Adult Students with State Financial Aid’ (Center for Law and Social Policy, and the Education Commission of the States)
Matthew Plooster - attended Higher Education Seminar Series (U Department of Educational Leadership and Policy):
Matthew Plooster attended ‘Is Islamophobia Real?’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Matthew Plooster attended ‘Gimme Shelter: The Homeless Student Taskforce’
(Study Affairs Diversity Council)
Hayley Shipton- RMASFAA conference 2016
Hayley Shipton- RAMASFAA Leadership pipeline
Mary Snow- attended ‘Life at the Utah Asia Campus’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Mary Snow- Completed Cash Management Course by NASFAA
Mary Snow- FSA conference, 2016
Mary Snow- attended ‘Anti-Racism Doesn’t Mean Anti-White’ (Division of Student Affairs)
Mary Snow- attended ‘How to Support Student Survivors of Sexual Assault’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Mary Snow- attended ‘Is Islamophobia Real?’ (Student Affairs Diversity Council)
Mary Snow- Staff Council, 2017
Mary Snow- Events Committee for Staff Council, 2017
Mary Snow- Conflicts of Interest Committee, 2017
Mary Snow- Staff Excellence Award Committee, 2017
Mary Snow- Professional Development Committee, 2017
Mary Snow- FAFSA Committee, 2017
Chelsea Springer- Co-chair for the Leadership Pipeline Program through RMASFAA
Emery Vigil- RMASFAA Summer Institute, 2017
Emery Vigil- presented at Utah NASPA Poster Session
Emery Vigil- FAFSA committee, 2017

b. Recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff

Karen Henriquez, Director of Financial Aid
Tim Despain, Associate Director of Operations

New Advisors:
Graham Bunt
Melanie Evans
James Farnsworth
Ofa Pilivi
New Systems Employees:  
Laura Gittins

New Accounting Employees:  
Shanon Brown

New Counselors:  
Jeffrey Furlong (contract employee for period Sept 12, 2016- June 30, 2017)  
Maria Mills

Work anniversary:  
Krista Burton: 20 years  
Emilie Hereth: 10 years  
Ryan Christensen: 5 years  
Shelly Reese: 10 years

c. Award recognition

Linh Ly, Vice President for Student Affairs Award for Service Excellence  
Matthew Plooster, 2016-2017 Recipient of Staff Council Scholarship  
Matthew Plooster, Student Affairs Diversity Certificate of Training  
Mary Snow, Student Affairs Diversity Certificate of Training

IV.  
**Department or AVP Additional Information**  
Your AVP may also have specific information that is needed. Some departments also create annual reports for different constituents. You are welcome to include this as additional information/attachment but not in lieu of the information requested above.