

**PRAIRIE VIEW A & M UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID**

**MANUAL OF FINANCIAL AID  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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# 1 **Section One: Introduction**

Federal regulations mandate that institutions have written policies and procedures. In addition to the federal requirement, there are many benefits to having a written document outlining Office of Student Financial Aid policies and procedures. These benefits include:

- 1) Distribution to appropriate others outside the Office of Student Financial Aid (OFA) for the purpose of informing and fostering an understanding of the complexity and operation of the OFA
- 2) OFA staff as a referral guide to assist in maintaining consistency in the problem-solving process
- 3) As an important component of a comprehensive training program.

## 1.1 Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this document is to record policies and procedures surrounding the delivery of financial aid at Prairie View A & M University. The OFA staff is expected to use professional judgment based upon the intent of all financial aid programs and office practices, if no policy or procedure addresses a given issue.

For purposes of this manual, definitions of policy and procedures are as follows:

Policy - A statement that guides present and future decisions and actions.

Procedure - A series of steps followed in a specific order to properly administer a financial aid program.

This Manual is intended to:

1. Provides the financial aid staff with current policies and procedures that pertain to eligibility assessment for federal, state, and university programs.
2. Provides each staff member with general and specific responsibilities of the total staff, their individual responsibilities, and the OFA relationship to other departments and divisions of the university.
3. Provides each staff member with general office procedures in order that a systematic and consistent

approach may be taken in the operation of all programs; ensuring that similar operations will be handled in a uniform manner.

4. Provides quick reference to various practices.

5. Facilitates the orientation and training of personnel when changes occur.

## 1.2 Financial Aid Reference Documents

Financial aid reference documents and publications are maintained by the Director, Office of Student Financial Aid and may be borrowed by personnel in the office. Reference documents specific to program managers daily duties may also be located in the manager's office for immediate access.

The Office of Student Financial Aid uses the following reference documents published by the U.S. Department of Education:

- Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook
- Title IV Training Guide
- Audit Guides
- Dear Colleague Letters
- FFELP Training Guide

The OFA also utilizes the following reference documents:

- State of Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Policy Manual
- National Association of Financial Aid Administrators Newsletter

## 1.3 Office of Student Financial Aid Professional Associations

The PVAMU Office of Student Financial Aid maintains membership in the following professional financial aid administration associations.

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)  
Southwest Association for Student Fin. Aid Administrators (SWASFAA)  
Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA)

## 2 **Section Two: Philosophy of Student Financial Aid at Prairie View A & M University**

The philosophy of student aid is to provide access and choice to students, who would otherwise not be able to pursue post-secondary education.

### 2.1 Mission Statements

#### 2.11 University Mission Statement

Prairie View A & M University, America's first fully state supported four year institution of higher learning for Blacks, is a comprehensive university and one of two land grant institutions in the State of Texas. Its mission is to promote and sustain academic programs that integrate instruction, research, and extension/public service in a design most responsive to the needs and endeavors of individuals and groups within its scope of influence. Ultimately, the University is dedicated to the promotion of knowledgeable, perceptive, and humane citizens- secure in their self-awareness, equipped for personal fulfillment, sensitive to the needs and aspirations of others, and committed to assuming productive roles in a challenging and ever-changing global society.

#### 2.12 Provost and Enrollment Management Mission Statement

To assist the University in fulfilling its mission by providing outstanding leadership, financial and general management functions that meet or exceed state and national standards, or recommended practices.

#### 2.13 Office of Student Financial Aid Mission Statement

To assist students in gaining an education by providing the most comprehensive financial assistance possible to current and perspective students. The Office is dedicated to maintaining accurate records and complying with Federal State and University regulations. Through a partnership with students, parents, and numerous offices and organizations, the Office is committed to timely communication and quality customer service.

### 2.2 Policy Development

#### 2.21 Responsibility for University Policy Development

The Director of Financial Aid is responsible for establishing University policy development surrounding the delivery of financial assistance. Policy development adheres to federal and State laws and regulations as well as to the mission of the University. Financial Aid policy is reported to and approved by the President and Provost when appropriate.

## 2.22 University Principles of Financial Aid

The staff at Prairie View A & M University has adopted the Principles of Student Financial Aid Administration from the University Scholarship Service.

1. The purpose of any financial aid program - university, governmental, or private - should be to provide monetary assistance to students who can benefit from further education but who cannot do so without such assistance. The primary purpose of a collegiate financial aid program should be to provide financial assistance to accepted students who, without such aid, would be unable to attend the University.
2. Each institution of higher education has an obligation to assist in realizing the national goal of equality of educational opportunity. The University should work with schools, community groups, and other educational institutions in support of this goal.
3. The University should publish budgets that state total student expenses realistically by including, where applicable, maintenance at home, commuting expenses, personal expenses, and necessary travel.
4. Parents are expected to contribute according to their means, taking into account their income, assets, number of dependents, and other relevant information. Students themselves are expected to contribute from their own assets and earnings, including appropriate borrowing against future earnings.
5. Financial aid should be offered only after determination that the resources of the family are insufficient to meet the student's educational

expenses. The amount of aid offered should not exceed the amount needed to meet the difference between the student's total educational expenses and the family's resources.

6. The amount and type of self-help expected from students should be related to the circumstances of the individual. In the assignment of funds to those students designated to receive financial aid, the largest amounts of total grant assistance should go to students with the least ability to pay.

7. The University should review its financial assistance awards annually and adjust them, if necessary to reflect changes in the financial needs of students and the expenses of attending the institution. The University has an obligation to inform students and parents of the financial aid renewal policies for enrolled students at the time of the initial offer of financial assistance.

8. Because the amount of financial assistance awarded reflects the economic circumstances of students and their families, PVAMU should refrain from any public announcement of the amount of aid offered and encourage students, their secondary schools, and others to respect the confidentiality of this information.

9. All documents, correspondence, and conversations between and among aid applicants, their families, and the Office of Student Financial Aid are confidential and entitled to the protection ordinarily arising from a counseling relationship.

10. Concerns for the student should be paramount. Financial aid should be administered in such a manner that other interests, important though they may be, are subordinate to the needs of students.

## 2.23 Operating Policies

The following operating policies are designed to assure that the OFA is effective in carrying out its responsibilities:

1. All students must apply for financial assistance by submitting appropriate application forms to the OFA.
2. All funds available to the University for financial assistance shall be administered through the OFA. The selection of students to receive certain designated scholarships and other awards shall be submitted by the responsible department to the OFA for processing (see scholarships). When funds or awards for students are received from outside sources by other offices (such as the Business Office) that office will be required to notify the OFA.
3. The OFA shall maintain adequate records to ensure proper administration of aid funds. This includes ensuring that aid given is not in excess of need and or the cost of attendance and that aggregate awards do not exceed total expenditures of funds under each program.
4. Selection of students to receive financial aid will be made without regard to age, sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or marital status.
5. Priority consideration for aid is given to students whose files are complete by March 1st of each year.
6. All undergraduate and graduate students applying for aid are required to apply annually for federal and State assistance.

#### 2.24 Financial Aid Sub-Committee

The Financial Aid Committee is a standing committee established by Director.

This committee is charged with the responsibility of reviewing and monitoring procedures governing the awarding process of financial aid at the University. This committee has the responsibility of administering the student appeals process when students fail to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress and/or Eligibility for Athletic Aid resulting in the termination of financial aid at the University.



In addition to the director and an assistant director from the OFA, this sub-committee includes faculty from the following schools/departments:

- School of Business
- School of Liberal Arts and Education
- School of Agriculture, Science and Technology
- School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education
- Office of the Registrar
- Controllers Office
- Office of University Advancement
- Office of Admissions
- Student Accounting
- Residence Life

### **3 Section Three: Administrative Organization of the Office of Student Financial Aid**

#### **3.1 Organizational Chart**

The following diagram illustrates the organizational structure for the PVAMU Office of Student Financial Aid.

#### **3.2 Division of Responsibility Between Financial Aid and Fiscal Offices**

There exists a clear and separate division of responsibility for the administration of financial aid programs which are divided between the OFA, and the Business Office. In order to maintain this division, each office is accountable for the following responsibilities.

##### **The Office of Student Financial Aid**

The Office of Student Financial Aid at PVAMU had established the following functions:

- Prepare Required Reports and Reconciliation
- Maintain Financial Aid Records Support
- Monitor Financial Aid System Processing
- Assist Other University Departments
- Monitor Financial Aid Operations
- Manage the University's Cohort and Perkins Default Rate
- Process Loans to Students
- Maintain Accurate Records in Financial Aid Systems
- Process Fee Waivers and Financial Aid Transcripts
- Coordinate Student Employment
- Coordinate State Grants and Scholarships

Provide Customer Service  
Award and Distribute Financial Aid to Students  
Process Pell Grants

### The Business Office

The Business Office responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

1. Maintain and disburse accurate bills
2. Collect payments for student accounts
3. Disburse funds to students
4. Report scholarship donations to the OFA

### 3.3 Position Descriptions: Office of Student Financial Aid

The job descriptions for each position in the OFA are listed below. These descriptions are reviewed on an annual basis.

#### 3.31 Director of Financial Aid

The Director, Office of Student Financial Aid reports to the Vice President of Administration and Finance. The director manages the overall operations of the Financial Aid Office.

The director is responsible for providing monthly reports to the Vice President of Administration and Finance and preparing policies and procedures for the Vice President's Review.

The director is responsible for reviewing and approving all external requests regarding financial aid from federal and state officials. The director continually monitors department activities for purposes of improvement in service delivery, compliance with federal, state and university regulations. The director is responsible for initiating changes in office policy and/or procedures as a result of updates/changes in federal, state and university regulations.

The director is responsible for directing assistant directors to ensure that all aspects of the financial aid office responsibilities are performed in a timely, professional and courteous manner.

The director works closely with the admissions director and the Registrar in disseminating accurate financial aid information to prospective students. Also the director works with the controller's Office and the Information Resource Center in facilitating accounting for financial aid and in generating the reports and statistics as needed.

### 3.32 Associate Director

The Associate Director, Student Services reports to the Director, Office of Student Financial Aid and supervises the financial aid packaging process, oversees the administration of financial aid programs, including student employment program.

Working closely with the director, this assistant director establishes procedures for information processing and handling inquiries, continually evaluating their effectiveness for service improvement.

The Associate Director, Student Services assists financial aid managers in responding to complex financial aid inquiries. This assistant director is responsible for coordinating training and development of financial aid staff members.

### 3.33 Associate Director, Technical Services

The Associate Director, Technical Services reports to the Director of Financial Aid. This position is responsible for overseeing the Financial Aid automated system (SAFE) and acts as liaison with the safe vendor and Office of Information the data input, processing and generating reports and maintaining the equipment.

The Associate Director, Technical Services works closely with the OIT, Registers Office and the Assistant Director Student Services to monitor the effectiveness of interfaces between automated systems.

This Associate Director, Technical Services is responsible for working with Student Accounts to ensure timely, accurate integration of Financial Aid data into the Student Billing Receivable System (BRS) and the Financial Accounting System (FAS).

### 3.34 Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant reports directly to the Director of Financial Aid and is responsible for the following:

1. Preparing financial aid transcripts

2. Assisting the Director with report and audit preparation as necessary
3. Maintaining accurate listing of students failing to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress. Coordinating activities necessary for the Appeals Committee meeting.
4. Maintaining office records and leave activity forms for all department employees.
5. Preparing travel requests and vouchers for OFA.

### 3.35 Program Managers

Program Managers are responsible for counseling students, determining and applying financial awards for eligible recipients. Program managers report directly to the Assistant Director, Student Services.

Program Managers review each applicant's file to determine eligibility under various financial aid programs. Each manager has been assigned a specialty area (i.e. loans, work-study, scholarships). However, all managers are required to be knowledgeable regarding regulations pertaining to eligibility for all programs administered by the Office of Student Financial Aid.

### 3.36 Data Control Personnel

Data Control Personnel are responsible for service to students relative to application paperwork submitted to the financial aid office for processing. Personnel under this title are also responsible for disbursement of funds and processing of award letters, follow-up requests, etc.

Each data staff person has been assigned specific students to service based on alpha order. All data control staffers functions cooperatively on interchangeably on certain projects in response to the office operating needs. Data Control Personnel report directly to the Assistant Director, Technical Services.

### 3.37 Information Desk Coordinator

The Information Desk Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of the Information Desk. Acts as point of contact for problem identification and resolution. Research and respond to written, telephone and walk-in inquiries for all financial aid programs. This person reports directly to the Assistant Director, Student Services.

### 3.5 General Office of Student Financial Aid Administration

#### 3.51 Office Hours

The OFA is open and available to service students from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office re-opens at 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday to accommodate students requiring late hours.

#### 3.52 Correspondence

General correspondence is routed by the Administrative Assistant to the Director as necessary.

Where appropriate, correspondence should be responded to within one week. The Director responds to all complaints either verbally or in writing.

#### 3.53 Telephone

Telephone calls are answered in a friendly and professional manner (i.e., "Office of Student Financial Aid, this is Mrs. Moore May I help you?") Typically, the Data Control Personnel answers incoming calls on the 800 line. Other office personnel have individual telephone numbers and may be reached directly.

Calls to the director's office are pre-screened for the following information:

1. A summary of the callers request/circumstances.
2. The caller's name and social security number (if appropriate).

#### 3.54 Distribution of Forms

General financial aid forms are distributed from the front desk of the OFA which is located in MSC 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.

Financial aid packets (consisting of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the Prairie View A & M University Financial Aid Application, and a Financial Aid Brochure. The packets may be:

1. Mailed to students and parents

2. Distributed by the Admissions Office

3. Distributed during financial aid workshops

### 3.55 Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are held once per week to evaluate the effectiveness of the current processes and/or personnel issues. Other meetings are called at the discretion of the Director.

### 3.56 Personnel Policies

The personnel policies of staff members are outlined in the following documents:

1. The Prairie View A & M University Personnel Policies Manual which is stored in the Human Resources Office.

2. The Prairie View A & M University Employee Handbook which is distributed to employees during orientation.

### 3.57 Performance Evaluations

Performance evaluations are conducted on an annual basis. The evaluation form provided by the Human Resources Department is used for OFA employees. Forms must be completed by Director/immediate supervisor in accordance with the Texas Department of Personnel and Training Guidelines

### 3.58 Absence Approvals

All requests for absences must be approved by the assigned supervisor.

### 3.59 Appointments with Office Staff

Students and parents are not required to make appointments. Any person wishing to make an appointment with the Director should be referred to her Administrative Assistant.

## 3.6 Records Management

### 3.61 Confidentiality of Records

All records and conversations between and aid applicant, his/her family and the staff of the OFA are confidential and entitled to the

protection ordinarily given a counseling relationship. Prairie View A & M University assures the confidentiality of student educational records in accordance with Prairie View A & M University rules, State, and federal laws including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (The Buckley Amendment - whose primary intent is to provide students access to their educational records and to limit dissemination of personally identifiable information without the student written consent) as amended. As a rule, all currently enrolled and former students have the right to review their records to determine their content and accuracy. Parents of dependent students, as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, who give evidence of this status, have the same rights. A student who wishes to obtain access to his/her financial aid record is able to do so in the presence of an OFA employee.

### 3.62 Public Information

The following information, considered "directory information" may be disclosed to the public by any Prairie View A & M University employee unless, the student has specifically requested in writing that this information be withheld.

1. Name
2. Local address
3. Local telephone number
4. Birthdate and place of birth
5. Major
6. Year in school
7. Enrollment status
8. Participation in sports
9. Weight and height of athletes
10. Dates of enrollment
11. Degrees and awards received
12. Most recent attendance of previous educational institution

### 13. Anticipated graduation date

#### 3.63 Non-Public Information

A student's consent is required for the disclosure or publication of any non-directory information with the following exceptions:

1. Another University employee
2. Representatives of federal and State agencies
3. Accrediting organizations

A student must submit a written release of information for any additional information to be released to any other person or agency. The student's release must contain:

1. Date of request
2. Student's Social Security Number
3. Student's signature
4. Specific contact name or agency
5. Summary of information which may be released.

#### 3.64 Active Records

The OFA maintains a master record for each student receiving financial assistance. All financial aid folders are retained for three years after submission of the FISAP report. Any records involved in any claim or expenditure which has been questioned by federal audit are retained until the question is resolved.

#### 3.65 Inactive Records

Inactive records are kept in the OFA for one year following the close of the fiscal year in which they were active. At the end of one year, the folders are moved to storage outside of the OFA. The OFA keeps inactive records for three years or longer depending on current University policy. After the appropriate time period, records are shredded.



### 3.66 Records on Computer Discs

Student records are maintained on-line for five years. When a new year is added, the oldest year is moved off-line to cartridge storage at the Office of Information and Technology (OIT).

### 3.67 Automated Program Files

The OFA maintains the Smart Financial Aid Database on the SAFE System. Federal eligibility information is received electronically from the Department of Education. This information is loaded and maintained by the OIT.

## 4 **Section Four: Calendar of Financial Aid Activities**

JANUARY - Spring Registration, Financial Aid Awardness, Load new year EDE software, begin receiving applications and mailing applications.

FEBRUARY - Financial Aid Workshop, Tentative Campus-Based Allocations, Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Conference.

MARCH - Department of Education Delivery System Training Workshop, Official Notice of Funding for Campus-Based Allocations, Develop Summer School Financial Aid Applications.

APRIL - Preparation of Smart Database for new year, Review of current year files for audit preparation.

MAY - Summer School Awards, SCHEV year-end reports, Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Conference, SCHEV allocations for New Year.

JUNE - New Year Awards, CSAP Data File

JULY - SCHEV S1/S2 Report, Initial Pell Grant Allocation, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Conference, Dues for SASFAA & NASFAA.

AUGUST - Fall Registration, Closeout of current year programs.

SEPTEMBER - SCHEV Financial Aid Data File, FISAP

OCTOBER - Fall Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrator Conference, Financial Aid Data File Edits

NOVEMBER - FISAP edits, Spring Awards

DECEMBER- Fall Reconciliation

See Attached Processing Calendar

## 5 **Section Five: Student Consumer Information**

The staff in the OFA recognizes that in order to understand the complications of Financial Aid, accurate and timely dissemination of information to consumers is vital. Several policies have been implemented to ensure appropriate dissemination is achieved.

### 5.1 Financial Aid Program Availability

Financial aid programs which are available to students attending Prairie View A & M University are distributed through the following PVAMU published documents:

1. The PVAMU Catalog
2. An aid information sheet distributed to students with award letters and information packets distributed to students during workshops.
3. The PVAMU Financial Aid Brochure.

Additional resources are published outside of the OFA and are distributed through the OFA. These resources include:

1. The Student Guide published by the U.S. Department of Education.
2. Financial Aid Sources for Texas Students published by the State Council of Texas.

Financial aid funds may be categorized into four basic sources: federal, state, University, and private. Because there are too many outside private sources to list in this manual, only Federal, State, and University sources for PVAMU are listed below.

#### 1. FEDERAL

Federal Pell Grant  
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Program (FSEOG)  
Federal Work-Study Program (CWS)  
Federal Perkins  
Federal Direct Student and Parent Loan Program

#### 2. STATE

Texas Grant Initial  
Texas Grant Renewal  
Texas B-On-Time  
T-PEG  
Texas Work-study Program

### 3. UNIVERSITY

Academic Scholarships  
University Grants  
Athletic Scholarships  
Departmental Scholarships  
Band Scholarships  
Fine and Performing Arts Scholarships  
PVAMU Endowment & Foundation Scholarships  
Student Employment Program

Additional information about these programs is listed in Section Twelve.

#### 5.2 Procedures and Forms Required to Apply

The procedures and forms required to apply for financial aid are published in the University Catalog and the PVAMU Financial Aid brochure. In addition, notices announcing deadlines and application availability are distributed on posters throughout the University and are printed in the student newspaper. Aid is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis using a priority deadline. Students who complete their files after this priority date may receive limited funding.

There are many forms, which may be required to evaluate student aid eligibility. However, a student need only submit the Student Aid Report (SAR) as a result of filing the Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the PVAMU Financial Aid Application (FAA).

Additional documents may be requested to complete processing of the aid request. Notification of these additional required documents are sent to students through a missing document letter. Additional information may include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Proof of citizenship.

2. Proof of selective service registration.
3. Marriage certificate.
4. Verification forms (independent and dependent).
5. Tax returns (parent and student or spouse).
6. Statement of non-tax filer (parent and student or spouse).
7. Student Aid report (SAR).
8. Admission Status.
9. Student Certifications.
10. Employment Verification.
11. Verification of marital status.

### 5.3 Methods of Disseminating Consumer Information

The primary method of disseminating consumer information to University students is through the PVAMU Catalogs. In addition, information is distributed through:

1. Consumer Information documents distributed to students with award letters.
2. The University newsletter.
3. The PVAMU brochure.

### 5.4 Student Eligibility Requirements

Student eligibility requirements are listed in the following documents:

1. PVAMU Catalogs.
2. The PVAMU Financial Aid Brochure.
3. The instructions on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

To be eligible to receive Federal assistance, a student must:

1. Be enrolled in an eligible program of study.
2. Be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or U.S. permanent resident or reside in the United States for other than a temporary purpose (supportive documentation may be required to verify residency or citizenship status).
3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress in their course of study.
4. Not be in default of any loan or owe a repayment on a Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, or State Grant.
5. Demonstrate financial need.

Additional information is listed in Section Twelve.

#### 5.5 Criteria for Selecting Recipients and Determining Award Amounts

Students may obtain the criteria used for selecting financial aid recipients and determining award amounts by making an appointment with the Financial Aid Director. Additional information concerning criteria and selection is listed in Section Fourteen.

#### 5.6 Availability of Forms and Instructions

Availability of forms and instructions is listed in the following documents:

1. Published on posters distributed on campus and in the school newspaper.
2. On specific aid applications (i.e., Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

#### 5.7 Rights and Responsibilities of Students on Financial Aid

As a recipient of financial aid, there are certain rights and responsibilities of which students should be aware. These rights and responsibilities of students on financial aid are listed in the following documents:

1. The PVAMU Catalog.
2. The PVAMU Brochure

Students have the right to know the:

1. Financial aid programs available at PVAMU.
2. Application process which must be followed to be considered for aid.
3. Criteria used to select recipients and calculate need.
4. PVAMU refund and repayment policy.
5. OFA policies surrounding satisfactory academic progress.
6. Special facilities and services available for the handicapped.

Students are responsible for:

1. Completing all forms accurately and by the published deadlines.
2. Submitting information requested by OFA staff in a timely manner.
3. Keeping the OFA informed of any changes in address, name, marital status, financial situation, or any change in student status.
4. Reporting to the OFA any additional assistance from non-University sources such as scholarships, loans, fellowships, and educational benefits.
5. Notifying the OFA of a change in enrollment status.
6. Maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
7. Re-applying for aid each year.

## 5.8 Cost of Attendance

A description of the fees for attendance is published in the PVAMU Catalog. A complete budget outlining the cost of attendance may be obtained from the OFA. Cost of attendance information is listed in Section Seven.

#### 5.9 Refund Policy

A brief description of the refund policy is described in the PVAMU Catalog. A detailed description of the refund policy is listed in Section Nineteen.

#### 5.10 Academic Programs Offered

A description of the academic programs offered at PVAMU is listed in the PVAMU Undergraduate Catalog. Additional information may be obtained from individual departments.

#### 5.11 Person(s) Designated to Provide Financial Aid Information

Information concerning persons designated to provide financial aid information is listed in the PVAMU Catalog. Only information published, provided, or referred by OFA staff is valid. Any additional information should be verified with staff from the OFA.

#### 5.12 Student Retention and Completion Data

Student retention and completion data is gathered by the Registrar's Office.

#### 5.13 Information for Students with Disabilities

Information concerning students with disabilities is listed in the PVAMU Catalog. Students are also notified of their responsibility to inform the OFA of any special or unusual circumstances via the following:

1. On information sheets distributed to students with award letters.
2. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The Provost Office provides information and assistance to students with disabilities who are in need of special accommodations. This office should be contacted for additional information.



#### 5.14 Information on Accreditation

Information concerning accreditation is listed in the PVAMU Catalog. Additional information may be obtained from the Office of the President.

### 6 **Section Six: Student Application for Financial Aid**

Students are required to submit aid applications on an annual basis. Priority consideration for receipt of financial aid funds administered by the OFA shall be given to students who submit all required documentation by the assigned deadline.

#### 6.1 Forms

There are many forms, which may be required to evaluate student aid eligibility. However, a student need only submit the Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and PVAMU Financial Aid Application (FAA) to begin the first step in applying for aid.

Additional documents may be requested to complete processing of the aid request. Notification of these additional required documents are sent to students through a missing document letter. Below are documents which may be required.

1. Free Application of Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - a need analysis document published by the Department of Education. Information is sent to the Central Processing Center (CPS) for an analysis of the expected family contribution (EFC). Students receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) which shows the results of the analysis. Federal aid may only be awarded based on the official results of the FAFSA.
2. PVAMU Financial Aid Application (FAA) - a document which collects secondary information including the request for Federal Work Study.
3. Student Aid Report (SAR) - students are not automatically required to submit SAR's. However, an Aid Administrator may request the document to verify conflicting information.

4. Federal Tax Returns - Federal Income Tax returns may be requested if a student is selected for verification, or if the Aid Administrator deems is necessary to verify conflicting information. Dependent students must submit their tax returns and the returns of their parents. Independent students must submit their tax returns and their spouse's if applicable. Tax returns must be signed or have the preparer's section completed.

6. Verification Worksheet - a document which collects updated information submitted on the FAFSA. Students who are selected for verification must submit a worksheet. Dependent students must obtain their parents' signature. Independent students must obtain their spouse's signature if appropriate. An Aid Administrator may request a Verification Worksheet to resolve conflicting documentation.

## 6.2 Application Process

Students begin the application process by submitting the PVAMU Application or the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The submission(s) informs the OFA that the student wishes to apply for financial aid. Tracking letters are sent to students every 10-15 days informing the student of documents or information which still needs to be submitted. If a student submits an incomplete document, it is returned for completion. If a student doesn't submit the required information in the appropriate time span, the application will become inactive and no further correspondence is sent. Once the student submits all the required documentation, an aid file is created and forwarded to the program manager for review. If the manager requires additional information, a letter and any appropriate forms will be sent to the student. If the student does not submit the requested information, the file will be considered inactive. Once the requested information is received, it is forwarded to the program manager for packaging.

## 6.3 Deadlines

March 1, proceeding the academic year for which aid is applied, is the priority deadline at PVAMU.

#### 6.4 Independent Student Status

The EFC from an independent student takes into account only the income and asset value of the student and spouse if applicable; the parent's financial information is not included. Students are automatically considered independent if they meet the following criteria:

1. They were born before January 1, 1964.
2. They are married, or enrolled in a graduate or professional course of study.
3. They are an orphan or a ward of the court or were a ward of the court until age 18.
4. They have legal dependents (other than a spouse).
5. They are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The Director, Associate Director and appointed Counselors has the authority to make students who do not meet the above criteria independent under special circumstances using Professional Judgment. Special circumstances must be documented and a copy of the documentation must be maintained in the student's file. Examples of special circumstances include:

1. An abusive relationship with the family.
2. A student under the age of 24 who is divorced.

Aid Administrators adjust the student's dependency status by completing the Dependency Override School Use Only section of the FAFSA or FAFSA Correction application.

### 7 **Section Seven: Student Budgets**

Student budgets are an important component in the financial aid process. Standard student budgets reflecting the PVAMU average student cost of attendance at a modest, but adequate standard of living are used to award financial aid. Special budget considerations are approved by the Associate or the Director of Financial Aid Director on a case-by-case basis.

#### 7.1 Basis for Student Budgets

The Director collects information to prepare standard costs on an annual basis.

#### Tuition and Fees

Tuition and Fees are approved by the Board of Visitors and the State of Texas. Tuition and Fees for a full-time equivalent are used in the standard budget.

#### Books and Supplies

An estimated cost of books from the University Bookstore.

#### Room and Board

Room and board expenses are divided into two categories: living on-campus and off-campus, living with parents and/or relatives.

#### Transportation

An estimation of transportation costs for students.

#### Personal Expenses

Personal expenses include costs for clothing, toiletries, medical/dental, recreational, and other miscellaneous expenses.

#### Dependent Care

An estimation of dependent care costs.

### 7.2 Standard Student Budgets

Student budgets include the cost of attendance as published in the Student Guide for Financial Information. Additional allowances for transportation, books and miscellaneous expenses are included.

### 7.3 Special Budget Considerations

Upon request, the program manager may review, and if appropriate, request an adjustment to a student budget. Students must submit supporting documentation. These

requests must be approved by the Associate Director or the Director of Financial Aid.

Examples of changes to standard budgets include, but are not limited to:

1. Child care - the cost of child care for single parents (or parents with a spouse also in university) with dependent children may be added to a standard budget. In the North Carolina area, most child care centers do not accept children on an hourly basis; therefore, full monthly costs are used.

2. Special needs - disabled students or students with special problems may be allocated funds to cover reasonable costs associated with disabilities or problems that are not already covered by other resources.

## 8 **Section Eight: Systems Operations**

The OFA at PVAMU is automated. The OFA uses the SAFE System to automate disbursement of funds as much as possible.

### 8.1 Loading Financial Aid Data

Federal eligibility information is received electronically from the Department of Education using Electronic Data Exchange (EDE).

## 9 **Section Nine: Verification**

### 9.1 Introduction

Verification is the process of confirming the accuracy of student reported data on financial aid applications. Only a portion of the student population is selected for verification.

### 9.2 Selection of Applications to be Verified

The OFA verifies those applicants identified by the Department of Education (DOE). Typically, the DOE selection criteria translates into verifying thirty percent of the financial aid population at PVAMU. In addition, Aid Administrators may select a student for verification if there is

a discrepancy or a condition which is unusual and warrants investigation.

#### 9.21 Exclusions

Listed below are certain circumstances where students do not have to complete verification. The program manager must identify and document in the aid folder why the student is not required to complete verification.

1. An applicant who died during the award year.
2. A resident of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau).
3. A student who is incarcerated
4. Applicants whose parents do not live in the United States and cannot be contacted.
5. A student immigrant (however, the student must meet the citizenship requirement).
6. A dependent student whose parents cannot comply because of specified reasons (i.e., parents are deceased, are physically or mentally incapacitated, or the student does not know where the parents reside).
7. A student who does not receive Title IV funds.

#### 9.22 Conflicting Information

If Aid Administrators have conflicting information for an applicant or have any reason to believe his or her application information is incorrect, we are required to resolve any discrepancies discovered in a student's file. Because need analysis information is only collected from the DOE, and additional information is typically not requested from students who are not

selected for verification, conflicting information is systematically rare.

### 9.3 Verification Time Frame

Upon receipt of any documentation that a student intends to apply for financial aid, a Tracking Letter listing missing items is sent to the student when the student record is activated after receipt of a federal transmission. This letter informs the student of any additional information which is required to complete his/her financial aid file. If the OFA has received DOE information identifying the student as being selected for verification, the tracking items letter requests the appropriate verification documents (i.e., verification form, student and parent tax returns).

Students are notified that the majority of financial aid funds are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis and that until the missing items are submitted to the OFA, additional processing of their file is not possible.

If a student submits documentation which appears fraudulent, the OFA staff member must notify the Assistant Director or Director of Financial Aid.

### 9.4 Document Collection Procedures

Required documentation items are identified and a copy of the tracking letter is kept in the pending file. When documents arrive, the data control person enters a receipt date beside the document name. When all required documents are received, the student is considered complete and ready to be packaged. The data control person gathers all documentation and creates a student folder for new students and updates previous year files for returning students. These files are routed to the program managers for verification and packaging.

#### 9.41 Documentation

Documentation submitted to the OFA must be legible, appropriate, and have the student's social security number for identification purposes. If the student submits a document which is not legible (i.e., a copy

of a tax return in which the income numbers are not identifiable), appropriate (a tax return is requested and the student submits a W-2), or identifiable (student submits a copy of the step-parents tax return and the last name does not match the student's and there is no student social security number) the documents will be returned and a request for additional documentation is requested. If possible, the return of documentation is recorded on the computer system.

#### 9.42 Processing Time Period

Students are notified that the majority of financial aid funds are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis and that until the missing items are submitted to the OFA, additional processing of their file is not possible.

#### 9.43 Failure to Comply

Students who fail to submit verification documents never become complete; therefore, aid is not awarded for these students.

#### 9.44 Submission After Deadline

Students who submit verification documents very late after the time they were requested will be awarded aid on an availability basis. Typically, by the end of the summer, funds have been depleted.

#### 9.45 Notification of Verification to Applicants

Students are notified that they are selected for verification on the Student Aid Report (SAR). In addition, the tracking letter indicates to the student he/she has been selected for verification.

### 9.5 Verification of Data Elements

PVAMU verifies only those data elements required by the federal government. However, Aid Administrators are free to ask for additional information if further investigation is needed to resolve a discrepancy.

#### 9.51 Adjusted Gross Income



Adjusted Gross Income is verified by comparing a copy of the student, spouse, or parent income tax return or Income Certification Statement to federal data. Discrepancies outside of tolerance levels must be corrected before further processing.

9.52 U.S. Income Tax Paid

U.S. Income Tax paid is verified by comparing a copy of the student, spouse, or parent income tax return or Income Certification Statement to federal data. Discrepancies outside of tolerance levels must be corrected before further processing.

9.53 Household Size

Household size is verified by comparing the Verification Worksheet to federal data. Discrepancies must be corrected before further processing

9.54 Exclusions

Although regulations allow situations when verification of household size is not required, the OFA does not have a systematic way to track these exclusions. Therefore, all students selected for verification must submit a response to the Household size question on the Verification Worksheet.

9.55 Number in Postsecondary Institutions

Number of family members enrolled at least half-time in postsecondary institutions is verified by comparing the Verification Worksheet to federal data. Discrepancies must be corrected before further processing.

9.56 Exceptions

Although regulations allow situations when verification of number in university is not required, the OFA does not have a systematic way to track these exclusions. Therefore, all students selected for verification must

submit a response to the Household size question on the Verification Worksheet.

#### 9.57 University Discretionary Items

The OFA verifies those applicants identified by the Department of Education (DOE). Aid Administrators may select a student for verification if there is a discrepancy or a condition which is unusual and warrants investigation. If a student submits verification documentation (i.e., tax return), the OFA staff must verify the information on the document against the information in the student's file.

#### 9.6 Tolerances

When verifying a student's record, there are two instances when discrepant information does not have to be corrected.

1. When the absolute value of the discrepancies does not exceed \$400.

2. When the EFC does not change after recalculation.

#### 9.7 Notification to Students

Students are notified of the results of verification in the form of an award letter.

##### 9.71 Correction Procedures

The procedures PVAMU requires to make corrections is identified in Section 8. Refer to this section for additional information.

##### 9.72 Overpayments

OFA policies and procedures are designed to eliminate the possibility of an overpayment from any fund. If however, an overpayment does occur, the student is placed on hold until the overpayments can be corrected. Students are not allowed to register for subsequent terms and academic transcripts are withheld until the account has been cleared.

#### 9.8 Updating Requirements and Procedures

There are three situations whereby and Aid Administrator may update student information. When students notify the aid office of an allowable update, the Aid Administrator may recalculate the student's EFC and the new figure may be used to award financial aid. Updates may occur for:

- 1) Dependency status except through marriage.
- 2) Family size.
- 3) Number of family members enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

#### 9.9 Interim Disbursements

Because the OFA is liable for disbursements made prior to verification, the OFA policy does not allow interim disbursements. Students must complete the verification process before aid is awarded or disbursed. Exceptions must include extenuating circumstances, be documented in the student's folder, and be monitored by an Aid Director.

### 10 **Section Ten: Need Analysis**

#### 10.1 General Policies of Need Analysis

All Federal, State, and University need-based financial aid programs are awarded based on the Federal expected family contribution (EFC). The expected family contribution (EFC) is the amount that a family can be expected to contribute toward a student's university costs. By comparing the EFC to the student's cost of attendance, the financial aid administrator at the school can determine the student's financial need for federal student aid from the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) and from other sources.

All data used to calculate a student's EFC come from the information the student provides: (1) on the Department's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), (2) on a Renewal FAFSA, (3) by the using the Department's new FAFSA Express software, or (4) by filing an application electronically at those schools that participate in the Department's Electronic Data Exchange (EDE).

The student's FAFSA information is sent to the federal central processing system. The EFC is computed by the central

processing system using the information the student reported on his or her application. Each student will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) that reports the information from the student's application and, if the information provided was accurate, the student's EFC. The student is instructed to check carefully the data on the SAR to ensure that it is correct. If corrections to the SAR are necessary, a student's school may submit corrections electronically or the student may make corrections on Part 2 of the SAR and return it to the address given at the end of Part 2.

## 11 **Section Eleven: Professional Judgment**

The Higher Education Act of 1992 allows financial aid administrators to make professional judgment decisions for special or unusual family or student circumstances. These circumstances must be documented. Circumstances requiring professional judgment decisions must be analyzed on a case-by-case basis.

Aid Administrators may treat a student with special circumstances differently than the strict application of the methodology would otherwise permit. Adjustments can either increase or decrease a student's EFC or cost of attendance. In the case of an adjustment to a student's EFC or cost of attendance, specified adjustments may be made to data elements. The reason for the adjustment must relate to that student's special circumstances and must be documented in the student's file.

### 11.1 Areas of Administration

Professional judgment decisions may be made to adjust eligibility for all University, Title IV, and campus-based aid. Documentation supporting special circumstances must be maintained in the student's folder.

### 11.2 Staff Authority

Only the Director has the authority to adjust a student's eligibility using professional judgment.

### 11.3 Circumstances

Student circumstances which may warrant a professional judgment decision include, but are not limited to:

1. Cancellation of parental contribution due to an abusive relationship with a family member. A signed

letter (on business stationery) from a Priest, a Rabbi, a therapist, an adult, non-family member would be an example of appropriate documentation. If possible, three letters documenting the situation should be collected.

2. Cancellation of parental contribution due to parental abandonment of the student. A notarized letter from an adult explaining the circumstances of the abandonment would be appropriate documentation. Typically, another adult is assisting the student (lives with a grandparent, a girlfriend/boyfriend's parent). If the student is receiving other assistance, in-kind support should be checked and documented.

#### 11.4 Student Appeals

Students must put his or her appeal in writing. The decision of the Director is final, and no further means for appeal are available.

#### 11.5 Documentation

Aid Administrators are required to document professional judgment decisions. This documentation must be maintained in the student's file. Because professional judgment situations are unique, specific required documentation is not listed for each case. It is left to the discretion of the Aid Administrator to select what is appropriate documentation.

1. Documentation should substantiate the student's situation.

2. Typically, documentation should be from a professional outside the family and a family member.

3. If collecting documentation about a student's life situation, documentation from more than one person should be collected.

## 12 **Section Twelve: Participation in Financial Aid Programs**

The OFA participates in a variety of financial aid programs. Assistance may include scholarships, grants, loans, and jobs. Scholarships and grants are gift awards which do not have to be repaid. Loans and work opportunities are considered self-help awards since repayment or performance of duties are required. The type of aid awarded depends upon the student's financial need and may include a combination of gift and self-help assistance.

### 12.1 University and Program Eligibility

#### 12.11 University Eligibility

As a public nonprofit institution, PVAMU has been authorized by the United States Secretary of Education to participate in financial aid programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 19612 as amended.

#### 12.12 Terms of Agreement

The Program Participation between PVAMU and the Department of Education entitles the OFA to participate in the following federal programs:

1. Federal Pell Grant Program.
2. Federal Family Educational Loan Program (including the Stafford Loan Program, the Unsubsidized Stafford Loan Program, and the Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students Program).
3. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program.
4. Federal Work-Study Program.

#### 12.13 University Application for Federal Funds

The OFA applies for funds through the Fiscal Operation Report and Application to Participate (FISAP). The OFA applies annually for federal funds through the FISAP, which is submitted each September. The Director, and the Accountant work

together to collect the necessary statistics to complete the report. The Director loads the finalized data into the Electronic FISAP Program and the information is sent electronically to the Department of Education. The signature page and required certifications are sent certified mail.

## 12.2 General Student Eligibility for Federal Title IV Financial Aid

There are several eligibility requirements which students must meet in order to be considered for federal funds. Students must:

1. Demonstrate financial need according to Federal Methodology.
2. Have a high school diploma, a GED, or have passed a test approved by the Department of Education.
3. Be enrolled in a degree seeking or eligible certificate program.
4. Be a U.S. Citizen or eligible non-citizen.
5. Make satisfactory academic progress as determined by the institution.
6. Sign a statement of educational purpose and a certification statement on refunds and default.
7. Sign an Anti-Drug Abuse Act Certification.
8. Sign a statement of registration status.

## 12.3 Federal Programs

The federal programs in which the OFA participates are listed in Section 12.1.2 above. The Federal Perkins Loan Program, the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program, and the Federal Work-Study Program are referred to as campus-based programs because although funded primarily with federal dollars, the institution is able to determine how these funds should be awarded to students.

### 12.31 Federal Pell Grant

The Federal Pell Grant is an entitlement program. Students must demonstrate financial need to qualify.

#### 12.3.1.1 Purpose of Program

The Federal Pell Grant program is federally funded with the purpose of helping financially needy students meet the cost of postsecondary education. This program is centrally administered by the federal government and is typically the foundation of a student's aid package.

#### 12.3.1.2 University Policy Statement

##### Determining Eligibility

The OFA uses the Pell award as the foundation of the student's financial aid package. Therefore, students requesting financial assistance during their enrollment are required to establish Federal Pell Grant eligibility before additional determination of funds eligibility is made and/ or awarded.

In order to determine eligibility for any federal financial aid program, students must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and have the results sent to PVAMU. The OFA will accept results through electronic transmission with the Central Processing System (CPS).

Student eligibility is determined only through the CPS of the Department of Education using the Federal Methodology need analysis formula. The OFA must have an official EFC before eligibility for any fund may be determined. Students who qualify for a Pell Grant have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) under 3850.

Students are notified of the amount of their Pell Grant through an award letter. With the award letter, the student receives documentation stating how funds are to be disbursed and



when the student may receive a cash disbursement. See Section 18 for additional information.

Students who are enrolled on a less-than-half-time basis may receive a Pell Grant.

All reports required by the Department of Education are submitted in a timely fashion.

The enrollment status of students is not determined until after the end of the add/drop period of the term. At that time, the actual amount of Pell Grant is determined for each student. Disbursement occurs only when the enrollment matches the appropriate Pell award. See Section 18 for additional information.

Pell awards are recalculated when there is a change in the EFC, when the enrollment status changes between terms within the same award year, and when the cost of attendance changes. Students must submit the FAFSA and have electronic data submitted by May 1 of each academic year in order to allow time to process the award.

Students who submit eligible SAR's or have electronic Pell data submitted to PVAMU after the end of an enrollment period for which the student met all the necessary criteria, will receive a retroactive (late) award provided the student's file is complete prior to the last day of classes for the academic year.

Students who do not use their entire Pell allocation during the fall and spring semesters may use the balance during the following summer period. It is the responsibility of the students to inform the OFA that they will be enrolled during the summer period and request assistance.

### Payment

Pell Grant funds are disbursed to students about 10 days prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> class day. Before disbursement, a compliance computer match is run to ensure the student remains eligible for the grant and is registered for the appropriate number of classes.

The Pell Grant is disbursed through a FAM to BR Interface program and supporting award rosters. After subtracting tuition and other appropriate outstanding charges Bursar's Office staff release the remaining proceeds to the student.

### Overawards

In the event of an overaward, the student's account is placed on hold until such time that the overpayment is rectified.

### Recordkeeping

Financial aid records are maintained in students folders as well as on computer tape. The Director and the Accountant are responsible for account management and appropriate record security for all student aid account transactions. The Assistant Directors, works closely with Student Accounts to ensure that all transactions are properly credited. The amount and date of any overpayment restored to the program account, the cost of attendance, determination of enrollment status, and enrollment period, eligibility of enrolled students who submit valid Pell records, name, Social Security number, amount paid, and amount and date of each payment are maintained in the OFA.

#### 12.3.1.3 Student Eligibility

Students must meet the eligibility requirements previously described. In addition, the Pell Grant is awarded only to first-time

undergraduates. Student eligibility is determined only through the Central Processing System of the Department of Education using the Federal Methodology need analysis formula.

#### 12.3.1.4 Determination of University Federal Pell Grant Budget

The determination of the Federal Pell Grant Budget is identical to the budget used for other University awarded aid.

#### 12.3.1.5 Amount of Federal Pell Grant

The amount of Federal Pell Grant for which a student is eligible is determined using the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and the corresponding cost of education from the Federal Pell Grant Eligibility Chart published by the Department of Education. The maximum amount for academic year 2005-06 is \$4,050; the minimum is \$400.

#### 12.3.1.6 Verification Procedures

Verification procedures for the Federal Pell Grant are identical to other Title IV aid.

#### 12.3.1.7 Student Aid Report (SAR) Processing

See Section 8 for additional information.

#### 12.3.1.8 Disbursement Procedures

Pell Grant funds are disbursed to students only after an official EFC from the Department of Education has been received. Offered aid must be accepted by the student via the financial aid award letter.

### 12.3.2 Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

The FSEOG is a gift program for students who demonstrate financial need.

### 12.3.2.1 Purpose of Program

The FSEOG program is federally funded for the purpose of helping the financially needy students meet the cost of postsecondary education. This program is administered by the institution; however, FSEOG funds are awarded only to Pell Grant recipients.

### 12.3.2.2 University Policy Statement

#### Determining Eligibility

In order to determine eligibility for any federal financial aid program, students must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and have the results sent to PVAMU. The OFA will accept results through electronic transmission with the Central Processing System (CPS). Student eligibility is determined only through the CPS of the Department of Education using the Federal Methodology need analysis formula. The OFA must have an official EFC of 1,000 or less before eligibility for SEOG will be considered. FSEOG grants are awarded only to students who qualify for a Pell Grant. Students must have remaining need of at least \$200 after the Pell Grant and the State Grants have been awarded to be entitled to the FSEOG.

Students are notified of the amount of their FSEOG eligibility through an award letter. With the award letter, the student receives documentation stating how funds are to be disbursed and when the student may receive a cash disbursement.

#### Matching Requirement

#### Not Applicable

#### Payment

FSEOG funds are disbursed to students 10 days prior to the first day of class for those

students who have a valid award letter. Before disbursement, a compliance computer match is run to ensure the student remains eligible for the grant and is registered for the appropriate number of classes.

The FSEOG is disbursed through the SBA590 disbursement program which subtracts tuition and other appropriate outstanding charges before releasing the remaining proceeds to the student.

#### Overawards

In the event of an overaward, the student's account is placed on hold until such time that the overpayment is rectified.

#### Recordkeeping

Financial aid records are maintained in students' folders as well as on computer tape. Student records include the demonstration of need and FSEOG eligibility.

#### 12.3.2.3 Student Eligibility

Students must meet the eligibility requirements described in Section 12.2. In addition, the FSEOG is awarded only to first-time undergraduates who are Pell eligible. Student eligibility is determined only through the Central Processing System of the Department of Education using the Federal Methodology need analysis formula.

#### 12.3.2.4 Amount of Award

The regulated maximum amount of FSEOG is \$4,000 and the minimum is \$100. However, the OFA self-imposes minimum and maximum awards (\$200 to \$2000) to ensure that the greatest number of students have an opportunity to receive a portion of the FSEOG allocation.

#### 12.3.2.5 Disbursement Procedures

FSEOG funds are disbursed to students only after an official EFC from the Department of Education has been received. Offered aid must be accepted by the student via the financial aid award letter. See Section 18 for disbursement procedures for all aid funds.

#### 12.3.3 Federal Work-Study Program (CWS)

The CWS program provides employment positions for undergraduate and graduate students who demonstrate financial need. These earnings assist students with educational expenses.

##### 12.3.3.1 Objectives and Purpose of the Program

The objectives and purpose of the CWS are to provide:

1. A source of financial aid to undergraduate and graduate students who demonstrate financial need.
2. Work experience which enhances the participants' education whenever possible.
3. An employment pool to the University, and to federal, State and local public agencies, that would not exist otherwise.

##### 12.3.3.2 University Policy Statement

###### Selection of students

The policy regarding dissemination of CWS funds is to award monies to as many students as possible. This is accomplished by awarding funds to needy (including part-time) students on a priority basis until funds are exhausted. Reasonable effort is made to place students in positions which complements and/or reinforces their educational and career goals. CWS funds are awarded to students who has

requested work on the (FAFSA) or University aid application.

#### Determination of award

Students are awarded the CWS based on the packaging formula described in Section 14. Records, which document CWS eligibility and how financial need is met, are maintained in the student file and the computer system.

Employment during periods of non-enrollment  
Students are allowed to work during periods of non-enrollment (i.e., vacations, breaks, summer session prior to June 30) provided sufficient work-study allocations exist. Typically, CWS funds are not awarded for summer terms; however, the Director may approve summer work-study if funds are available. Students, who work under the CWS during the summer and are not enrolled, must sign an intent to enroll statement.

#### Off-campus employment

Typically, CWS contracts with outside agencies are submitted to the A&M System Legal Advisor for review. Exceptions require the approval from the Director of Financial Aid and a written agreement.

#### Overawards

Students are only awarded CWS funds if, in combination with other resources, the award does not exceed the student's need. If additional resources are received after CWS wages are paid, the overaward is the amount which exceeds the student's need by more than \$300.00.

Students may not earn work-study funds in excess of their CWS award. Students who earn their CWS award and want to continue working may do so if they have the employer's consent and are paid with non-CWS funds.

### CWS fund transfers

At the discretion of the Director, 10% of CWS funds may be transferred to the FSEOG account. In addition, 10% of CWS funds may be carried forward or back to the next or last academic year's work-study account.

### Federal share

The law requires a minimum 25% University match. (HBCU Waiver, not required)

#### 12.3.3.3 Student Eligibility

Students must meet general eligibility for Federal Title IV funds as described in Section 12.2.

#### 12.3.3.4 Minimum and Maximum Awards

The minimum CWS award for undergraduates is \$1,200 for the 05-06 academic year. The maximum award is \$2,400. Exceptions for additional awards may be made by Aid Administrators if funding allows. The student must submit documentation from an employer verifying that potential work above the maximum is available.

#### 12.3.3.5 Wage Rates

Students are paid at the Federal Minimum wage rate. The minimum for 2005/06 is \$5.75.

#### 12.3.3.6 Placement Procedures

##### Collection of available positions

The program manager assigned to the CWS Program coordinates available positions with supervisor and students. This manager meets with the students as well as the supervisors to explain what is expected and required.



### Notification of award and employment placement procedures

The student receives an award letter indicating the amount of the CWSP award.

### Student placement

Students must meet with supervisor after receiving assignments. The student and supervisor must agree and approve of the assignment. If the student is hired, the student must return the contact with the student and supervisor's signature.

#### 12.3.3.7 Supervision

Supervisors are instructed to maintain adequate supervision of student with regard to attendance and quality of job performance via the CWS Employer Manual.

A work schedule must be agreed upon each semester by the student and the supervisor which is not in conflict with the student's class schedule.

#### 12.3.3.8 Time Sheets

Students receive time sheets from the OFA. After completion of the time sheet, the student's work hours are checked and signed by the department supervisor. The supervisor returns the time sheet to the Student Employment Office along with Payroll Preparation Report (PPR). The time sheets and PPR's are submitted to the Payroll Office.

#### 12.3.3.9 Recordkeeping

Records concerning compensation for student employment are maintained in the Payroll and Office of Student Financial Aid. A record of student earnings is loaded into the financial aid computer system. Earning records are reconciled between the Office of Student

Financial Aid, the Payroll Office, and the Cashier's Office at the end of each semester and at the end of the academic year for the FISAP report.

#### 12.3.3.10 Payment Procedures/Frequency

Students are issued a paycheck from the University monthly for hours worked documented on the student time sheet.

#### 12.3.3.11 University Employment

Students may obtain University employment by checking job posting on Student Employment Website.

### 12.3.7 Federal Parent (Plus) Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

The PLUS provides non-subsidized low or capped interest rate loans to parents of undergraduate students regardless of financial need. These funds assist students with educational expenses.

#### 12.3.7.1 Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the PLUS program is to provide non-subsidized low or capped interest rate loans with deferred repayment to parents of dependent students.

#### 12.3.7.2 University Policy Statement

The PLUS loan may be used to replace family contribution to the extent that it does not exceed the difference between the student's cost of attendance and other financial aid. PLUS loans are processed for parents or guardians of dependent undergraduate students.

The student, for whom the parent is borrowing the loan, must meet all of the eligibility criteria for financial aid, except need analysis, Pell

Grant eligibility, Stafford Loan eligibility, and Statement of Educational Purpose.

The parent borrower must meet the citizenship criteria and not be in default or owe a repayment on a Title IV loan or grant.

#### 12.3.7.3 Student Eligibility

Students must meet general eligibility for Federal Title IV funds as previously described.

#### 12.3.7.4 Minimum and Maximum Awards

The maximum award for the PLUS loan is the cost of education minus other financial assistance. Although there is no minimum regulated, lending institutions typically will not loan amounts for less than \$100.00. There is not an aggregate borrowing limit.

#### 12.3.7.5 Processing Procedures

See Section 16 for processing information.

#### 12.3.7.6 Disbursement Procedures

The PLUS loan proceeds are disbursed directly to the school, and/or through a check made co-payable to the institution and the parent borrower

#### 12.3.7.7 Report to Lenders

If a student withdraws or leaves school, the lending institution must be notified within sixty days.

### 12.4 State Financial Aid Programs

General eligibility requirements:

The results of the FAFSA and the PVAMU application for financial aid must be on file and the student must:

- 1) Be accepted for at least half-time study at PVAMU in an eligible undergraduate program of study.
- 2) Be a citizen, permanent resident or eligible non-citizen of the U.S.
- 3) Be a bona-fide domiciliary resident of Texas.
- 4) Meet satisfactory academic progress standards.
- 5) Meet the federal eligibility requirements
- 6) Demonstrate financial need.

### **13     Section Thirteen: Scholarships**

#### **13.1   University Scholarships**

All PVAMU scholarships awarded to students must be awarded in accordance with the following policies and procedures effective and revised March, 2006.

##### **13.1   Purpose**

Scholarships are primarily designed to recognize and reward students who have consistently demonstrated high academic achievement through the awarding of monetary grants that does do not require repayment.

The University must, when awarding scholarships and other financial aid, comply with various federal regulations that are designed to ensure fairness, equity, and responsiveness to individual students. These federal policies, in part, require the University:

- To coordinate aid from TitleIV programs with the University's other federal and non federal student aid programs;
- To properly package and most effectively use the various types of student assistance (federal, state, institutional, private, etc.); and
- To ensure that a student's financial aid package does not exceed his or her need.

##### **13.2   Procedure**

All awarding and communication to students regarding eligibility and award of any scholarship,

regardless of the source of funding, will be made only by the Scholarship Office and the various departments, colleges, through the Scholarship Office to ensure: (1) compliance with all federal regulations; (2) scholarship awards meet University criteria or criteria established by donors of scholarship fund; and (3) aid is most effectively distributed so as to maximize individual student financial aid packages while not exceeding the student's calculated need.

### 13.3 Scholarship Committees

There are two committees associated directly with administering the PVAMU scholarships.

#### 13.31 The University Scholarship Oversight Committee

The University Scholarship Oversight Committee will provide administrative oversight of the scholarship process to ensure compliance with these procedures.

The University Scholarship Oversight Committee will be comprised of the Director of Financial Aid and selected members of the faculty, appointed by the Provost.

The University Scholarship Oversight Committee shall be informed of decisions by the Academic Scholarship Committee as to specific student individuals who have been designated to receive specific scholarship resources.

The University Scholarship Oversight Committee shall select the student to receive an academic scholarship award. Each college/department will select committee members from their department to select students for various scholarship awards.

The University Scholarship Oversight Committee shall report to the Associate

Provost of Enrollment and Management and the Director of Financial Aid.

### 13.32 The University Academic Scholarship Committee

The University Academic Scholarship Committee shall screen applicants for academic scholarships and match specific scholarship funding resources to students meeting the University's criteria for the receipt of scholarships.

In such cases where a clear decision cannot be made to award a scholarship, the relevant information and decision will be referred to the Assistant Director of Financial Aid.

The University Academic Scholarship Committee shall develop and implement procedures that are consistent with this policy to guide its selection efforts.

The University Academic Scholarship Committee's screening and matching efforts shall be particularly applied and limited to Presidential Regent Scholars and Distinguish Achieve.

The University Academic Scholarship Committee shall be comprised of a chairperson, assistant chairperson and eight faculty members selected by the Provost. Ex-officio members will consist of the Associate Provost of Enrollment and Management, the Financial Aid Director, the Assistant Director of Financial Aid and the Director of Scholarship who shall serve in a non-voting and ex officio capacity.

### 13.4 Processing Scholarship Awards - Student Eligibility

The University's publication "Your Guide to Scholarships and Financial Aid" shall be the primary publication of the scholarship program.

Students considered to be eligible for any one of the University or department based scholarships, including scholarships awarded to Regent Presidential and Distinguished Achievement Scholars, will only be those individuals who have applied to the University, been accepted for admission to the University, have submitted all required scholarship application forms, requested materials, and meet the minimum scholastic and other requirements specific in the University's published descriptions of these various scholarship programs. Failure to comply with any one of these requirements is sufficient basis to not consider a student when decisions are made to award scholarships.

Regent Presidential and Distinguished Achievement Scholars must maintain, each semester, the minimum required cumulative grade point average and semester credit hours established. However, their eligibility may be extended by the University Academic Scholarship Committee.

The University shall require students to signify their acceptance and agreement of the scholarship to the University in order to retain eligibility for the Regent Presidential and Distinguished Achievement Scholars Program. Such students shall be given 15 days to signify acceptance of admission once informed that they are qualified by the Scholarship Office.

Official notification of the final awarding of Regent Presidential, ROTC, USDA, and University scholarships may be communicated only through the University's Scholarship Office.

Scholarship funds may be applied to student's account only upon their actual enrollment for classes and validation. The student must be enrolled in a minimum of fifteen (15) Prairie View A & M University Credit hours. Fifteen (15) hours fall and spring semester and a 3.0

grade point average. Credit hours earned in the summer session will not be retroactively applied to the prior academic year.

### 13.5 Documentation Requirements

The awarding of individual scholarship, to an individual student, may be made only after the University Academic Scholarship Committee accumulates and certifies the availability and completeness of appropriate documentation. This documentation will include application, transcript and test scores, a listing of all students who were considered for the scholarship being awarded and the criteria by which they were compared, and all supplemental information that might be required of those applying for the scholarship.

Individual scholarship funds for which responsibility is assigned to individual departments (i.e., Scholarship Coordinators, Account managers) must be disbursed in accordance with the stipulated wishes of the original donor or grantor. The selection process must ensure that all potential eligible candidates, at the time the award of scholarship is made, are considered, based upon documentation requested by the individual department. Upon the decision to award, documentation supporting the award decision must be submitted to Scholarship Office. The Scholarship Office will provide direct consultation on the award process to the Director of Financial Aid including date of submission of awardee names to Financial Aid.

### 13.6 Notification of Eligibility and Award

The responsibility for communicating to a prospective student that they are potentially eligible to receive University scholarship or restricted scholarship support rests fully with the Assistant Director of Financial Aid. Such communications must include written



instructions on how the student can achieve full eligibility and compete for actual awards.

The responsibility for communicating to a prospective student that their potential eligibility as a Regent Presidential and Distinguished Achievement Scholar rests fully with the Assistant Director or upon the Executive Director's formal delegation. Such communications must include written instructions on how the student can achieve full eligibility.

The Scholarship Office shall formally and expeditiously notify all prospective Regent Presidential and Distinguished Achievement Scholars of their eligibility, or ineligibility, to be awarded scholarships based on the student submission of required documents. Such notice shall instruct the student on the need to accept admission as a means of retaining eligibility for the Academic Scholarship Program and for reserving scholarship support.

There is no restriction on who may issue a congratulatory note or letter to students who have been awarded a scholarship, including scholarships awarded to Regent Presidential and Distinguished Achievement Scholarship. However, no such congratulatory notes can be issued until the formal award notification is issued by the Scholarship Office, which will bear the responsibility of informing the appropriate units of the University community when such award notices are issued. Congratulatory letters are prepared and signed by the President of the University.

### 13.7 Periodic Reporting

A formal report is prepared at the end of an awarding period which will contain information on academic scholarships awarded to incoming freshmen.

A report shall be prepared and forwarded to the Director of Financial Aid at the end of each fall and spring semester on all academic scholarship students who have forfeited, completed eight semesters, and students who have been placed on probation. Students will be notified in writing of their academic standing.

The awarding of freshmen and transfer student scholarship shall be reported to the Associate Provost of Enrollment Management and the Director of Financial Aid.

### 13.8 Establishing New Scholarships

Scholarships beyond those existing at the issuance of this policy, shall either be established by the wishes of donors, as specified in their gift instruments, after such gifts have been accepted under policies established by the Development Office or upon the approval of the Vice President of Development.

### **13.10 Athletic Scholarships**

Prairie View A & M University is a Division I AA School governed by the rules and regulations of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and participates in the South Western Athletic Association (SWAC). The NCAA distributes a Division IAA Manual annually.

#### **Administering Athletic Aid**

Procedures for administering athletic scholarships, grant-in-aid, loans, and student employment are housed in the NCAA Guide to Financial Aid [Bylaws Article 15.01-15.5].

**Grant-in-aid** are funds provided to student –athletes from various sources to pay or assist in paying their cost of education at the institution. As used in NCAA legislation “financial aid” includes all institutional, federal and state financial aid and other permissible financial aid as set forth below.

#### **Institutional Financial Aid.**

The following sources of financial aid are considered to be institutional financial aid:

- (a) All funds administered by the institution (e.g., scholarships, grants, loans, work-study both on- and off-campus employment, tuition waivers);
- (b) Aid from government or private sources for which the institution is responsible for processing the recipient or determining the amount of aid, or providing matching or supplementary funds for a previously determined recipient;

Each year the Intercollegiate Athletics Department submits the Recommendation for Athletic Financial Aid of all potential student athletes that will be offered a full or partial athletic grant. A student athlete may receive full grant-in-aid to cover the cost of tuition and fees, room and board and required course-related books at the institution. It is permissible for the school student-athletes financial aid agreement to reflect that the student-athlete award notification includes Pell Grant funds and that the student-athlete athletic grant may be adjusted due to receipt of such funds.

According to the NCAA rules and regulations and Federal Title IV guidelines, Prairie View A & M University cannot award grant-in-aid to a student-athlete that exceeds the cost of attendance, (tuition & fees, room, board, transportation, and other expenses related to attendance at this school. The cost of attendance is calculated for student-athletes in accordance with the cost-of-attendance policies and procedures that are used for all students in general.

**ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS** are awarded by the Office of Student Financial Aid via recommendations from the Intercollegiate Athletic Department by sport. These programs include the following sports: Football, Basketball-Men, Basketball-Women, Track-Men, Track-Women, Tennis-Men, Tennis-Women, Softball, Baseball, Volleyball, Golf and Bowling.

### **DETAILED PROCEDURES**

► The eligibility of all incoming potential student athletes is determined by the Compliance Officer (with the assistance of the Admission and Registrar's Office). Returning student eligibility is determined by the Compliance Officer (with the assistance of the Registrar's Office).

► Once the students are deemed eligible, the Athletic Department provides the Office of Student Financial Aid a letter of "Recommendation for Financial Aid" to include the amount to be awarded to each student. This information should be in the office no later than June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

- ▶ Upon receipt of “Recommendation”, the following steps are taken:
  - The Document Tracking Area will return each student’s folder
  - The student’s folder is then submitted to a counselor for an award to be prepared for packaging.  
Notification Letter to be generated.
  - After awards are made and Award Notification Letters generated, they are mailed to student-athletes. A cover letter is mailed with the Award Notification Letter stating the terms and conditions of the award.
  - All student athletes receiving athletic aid must be mailed an Award Notification Letter by July 1.
  
- ▶ The Athletic Department will also submit the names of student athletes whom athletic awards will not be renewed.
  
- ▶ **Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress:** In order to maintain eligibility for financial aid from Federal, State and Institutional programs at Prairie View A & M University, a student must continue to make reasonable satisfactory academic progress toward completion of their degree program of study. Student Athletes may be required to maintain a separate GPA and/or course load requirement in order to continue receiving an athletic scholarship.
  
- ▶ The Office of Student Financial Aid mails a Cancellation or Reduction letter to each student indicating their athletic award has been canceled or reduced. This letter must be mailed to the student by July 1. The student has the right to appeal this decision to the Financial Aid Subcommittee.
  
- ▶ Upon receipt of the student’s signed Award Notification Letter, enrollment is verified by the Office of Student Financial Aid via the Registrar’s Office. At this point, funds are disbursed to the student’s account accordingly.
  
- ▶ Athletic Detailed Disbursement Rosters (FAMATHHT) is generated quarterly and the Sport by Sport Athletic Award Roster (FAM030C) is generated monthly. These disbursement rosters are reconciled against the squad listings received from the Athletic Department.
  
- ▶ There are meetings with the Athletic Department and/or Compliance Officer at least once a semester to discuss any changes that may have occurred.
  
- ▶ At the end of the academic year, a financial reconciliation report is done, and a final roster of all student athletes awarded/dispursed is submitted to the Athletic Office.

### **13.11 Exceptions**

Requests for Exceptions to these procedures must be presented in writing, to the President.

#### **14 Section Fourteen: Awarding Financial Aid**

Financial Assistance at PVAMU is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. Priority is given to students apply by the priority deadline of March 31.

The first step of the award process is to determine the student's budget using the PVAMU application and the SARs.

The second step of the award process is to determine the student's need for financial assistance by subtracting the EFC from the student's budget. After the need has been established, we process in awarding eligible financial programs accordingly.

The Pell Grant is the foundation of a student's award package because eligibility is determined by the Federal Government. Therefore, we first determine if students have Pell Eligibility. If a student's EFC is between 0 - 3850 and meet the other general requirements, the student is eligible for the Federal Pell Grant. We determine the amount by reviewing the Federal Pell Grant Payment & Disbursement Schedule. Also factored in determining the amount of the award is the student's enrollment status, and cost of attendance.

After eligibility for the Pell Grant is determined, we subtract the Federal Pell Grant from the need to determine the student's remaining need for financial assistance. We proceed to award the campus-based programs, state programs, and University programs according to remaining need. The Commonwealth and VGAP are awarded according to the PVAMU award schedule approved by SCHEV. Due to limited funds, generally we are unable to meet 100% of student's need for financial assistance.

The Awards are entered in the student's file on an award worksheet. The file also contains a documentation sheet for comments. After the Director makes the awards, data for the EDE Express is downloaded in the Smart Data Base. The Assistant to the Director enters the award information and an Award Notification Statement/Award Letter is generated.

### 14.3 Determination of Total Funds to be Awarded

The Director in conjunction with the Business Manager determines the total aid to be awarded during an academic year. The Department of Education sends the OFA information detailing annual fund allocations through the Federal Authorization Letter with the Official Notice of Funding. Determining the total funds available includes an evaluation and projection of available funds, required matching, and administrative expense. Careful projections are made to enable the OFA staff to offer fair and equitable packages to students. A determination is made based on prior year history, and an increase of projected funds to account for attrition. Also, we receive funds allocation from State of Texas Coordinating Board and fund allocation from the Vice President Administration of Finance for University Programs.

### 14.4 Outside Resources

Students are encouraged to seek assistance from outside resources. It is required that all outside assistance be reported to the OFA. Student aid including outside resources, may not exceed the student's cost of attendance. Therefore, if a student has been awarded by the aid office and receives an outside award, an adjustment to the original award letter may be necessary. If an adjustment is made, the outside aid will replace self-help aid if possible.

### 14.5 Award Letter and Acceptance of Awards

Students receive notice of financial aid via an award letter. Students are required to accept or decline each award (blank responses are considered acceptances). Students who do not return award letters within 14 days, may lose all funds except the Federal Pell Grant. Other funds are reawarded to other needy students. A student may receive a reinstatement of a canceled offer only if aid funds are available. Monies are not reserved for reinstated awards.

### 14.6 Summer Aid

If a student has eligibility for a Pell Grant and has not used his/her entire allocation during the academic year, the

appropriate remainder may be used during the summer enrollment period. Remaining monies may be used for summer only. Exceptions must be approved by the Director.

#### 14.8 International Students

International students are not eligible for federal or state financial aid because they do not meet the citizenship requirement. International students may receive non-federal aid and are encouraged to apply for such aid.

### 15 **Section Fifteen: Revision of Financial Aid Awards**

Once an award letter is sent to the student, there may be instances which warrant a change to the original notification. The Director may review a student's circumstances, make an adjustment to an award, and release a revised award letter. This revised award invalidates the original award notice.

#### 15.1 Revision Initiated by the Office of Student Financial Aid

The OFA will automatically consider a revision in a student's aid package when the following occurs:

1. There is conflicting information in the file.
2. There are changes resulting from verification.
3. There is a change in availability of funds.
4. There is an OFA staff member error.

The information provide along with the award letter acknowledges right of the OFA to make a change to any award. Students are sent a revised award letter as soon as possible. In the case of an office error, it is customary to contact the student personally or send a personalized letter.

#### 15.2 Revisions Initiated by Request from Student

Students may decline any portion of their award. Lack of acceptance does not count as a revision. If a student wants to add an award, the request will be referred to the program manager.

It is the student's responsibility to notify the OFA of changes in a student's resources. If the student reveals a change in circumstances, which may affect the student's family contribution, the student must document the situation in writing including supportive documentation. If a change to the award is allowable, the program manager will make an adjustment and release a revised award letter.

### 15.3 Overawards

An overaward occurs any time a student's disbursed financial aid (federal, University, and outside aid) and other resources exceeds the cost of attendance for the award period by more than an allowable tolerance.

#### 15.31 Eliminating an Overaward

Before reducing a student's aid package because of an overaward, the Aid Administrator should always attempt to alleviate the situation by reducing or eliminating the overaward. Some awards may be reduced or canceled in order to alleviate an overaward.

#### 15.32 Causes of an Overaward and/ or Overpayment

There are several causes of an overaward:

1. Student wages - the student earns more than the awarded CWS allocation.
2. Change in the enrollment status - the student withdraws or drops below the projected enrollment status.
3. Reduction in cost of attendance - the student changes budget categories.
4. Additional resources - the student has resources greater than those used to calculate the award.
5. Administrative error - the Aid Administrator inadvertently makes an error.



6. Fraud - the student intentionally deceives or misrepresents information to obtain funds.

### 15.33 Treatment of an Overaward

If eliminating the overaward is not possible the Aid Administrator must reduce the overaward using the following sequence:

1. An overaward over \$300 based on surplus earnings must be counted as a resource for the next academic year.
2. An overaward from an administrative error must first reduce or eliminate next semester's overpayment. The Aid Administrator must then bill the student for any remaining amount.
3. If an Overaward occurs due to fraud, the Director must be notified and corrective action taken.

## 16 **Section Sixteen: Processing Loans**

### Federal FFELP Loans

16.1 The Federal Family Educational Loan Program is designed to assist regular matriculating students' in meeting their financial obligations and offers a simpler way to borrow funds. Under this program, the funds for your loans are lent to you directly by U.S. Department of Education.

### Federal Stafford (Subsidized) Loans

Under this program, the federal government pays the interest on these loans while the students (dependent or independent) are in school and during deferments. A student must demonstrate financial need in order to receive this loan.

### Federal Stafford (Unsubsidized) Loans

Under this program, the federal government does not pay the interest while a student (dependent or independent) is in school or during deferments for this loan. A student can receive this loan regardless of financial need up to the

established limits. Also, students whose parents are unable to borrow under the (PLUS) program are eligible to receive the program.

### Federal Parent (PLUS) Loans for Undergraduate Students

This program allows credit-worthy parents to borrow money for the student. The parent must submit to the Office of Student Financial Aid a PLUS loan application request the amount they are seeking to borrow. If the Loan is approved, the parent is responsible for the repayment of this loan. The initial payment starts approximately sixty days after the loan has been fully disbursed to the student's account.

### Loan Limits

The loan amounts undergraduates and graduates students may be eligible to borrow under these programs are determined by grade level.

### Procedures:

#### A. Determine Borrower Eligibility and Loan Amounts

1. All students applying for Federal FFEL Loans must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
2. The Central Processing System (CPS) will match required database information and calculate a student's expected family contribution (EFC) using the federal need analysis.
3. After receiving an electronic report from the CPS, the calculated EFC will be used to determine the student's award package for Federal FFELP Loans.
4. The student will be notified of the estimated Federal FFELP Loan award amount in his/her award letter package. Upon acceptance, the student will return the signed award letter to the Office of Student Financial Aid.

#### B. Establish Loan Origination Records

1. A loan origination record will be created for each student receiving a Federal FFELP Loan. This record creates a permanent borrower

record in the Department of Education's loan database.

2. The loan origination record will be created electronically by importing ISIR data from EDEXpress. This record will contain Student's Demographic, financial and statistical information.

C. Printing Promissory Notes

1. The promissory notes are created using information from the loan origination records. Separate promissory notes are utilized by a student to borrow both subsidized and unsubsidized Federal Direct Stafford Loan funds if the loans are initiated at the same time.
2. A promissory note will be printed in the Loan area using preprinted forms provided by the Department. Three copies will be printed: (a) Department's (Servicer) original, (b) Student's copy, and (c) School's copy.
3. The student's permanent address must appear on the promissory note and is the only address included in the servicer's records; however, the Office of Student Financial Aid may choose to mail an alter

D. Send Promissory Note/Disclosure Statement

1. The promissory notes will be delivered to the borrowers via mail or may be pick-up by students in the Office of Student Financial Aid. The original, borrower and servicer copies are included.
2. The borrower must complete the promissory note by verifying all preprinted information, supplying missing information and signing and dating the note.
3. The borrower retains a copy of the promissory note and returns the original (servicer's copy) to the Office of Student Financial Aid.

E. Transmission of Loan Origination Records and Promissory Notes to the Servicer

1. Upon receipt, the Loan Program Manager is responsible for reviewing the promissory note for completeness and accuracy prior to transmitting to the Servicer. Updates, if any, to the loan origination record will be made at this time.
2. The Loan Program Manager will transmit electronic origination records to the servicer for selected borrows.
3. Upon receive, the servicer will verify the loan origination records for completeness and accuracy. If any edits need to be made to the records, the Servicer will edit and validate electronically received loan origination data within a 24 hour period.
4. Completed promissory notes will be mailed to the Servicer with a paper manifest listing.
  
5. The Loan Program Manager will track and manage the promissory notes using the Department's loan origination software in determining when the promissory notes were returned from the student and if and when the promissory notes were sent to the Servicer. The software will also record the dates the Servicer verifies receipt of the notes and confirms its acceptance of the notes.

## **17 Section Seventeen: Enrollment Certification Process**

Data is submitted to the Clearinghouse pertaining to the student enrollment status every 30 days. The National Student Loan Data System when students complete the FAFSA for students at PVAMU.

### **17.1 National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)**

NSLDS is the first national database of information relating to loans and other Title IV financial aid disbursed to students. The overall purpose of NSLDS is to support ED and the entire student aid community in a variety of operational research functions aimed at improving the administration and delivery of Title IV student aid programs.

Beginning with the 2002-03 award year, the National Student Loan Data System may be used by postsecondary educational institutions to meet the regulatory requirements for obtaining Financial Aid Transcripts for most Title IV student aid applicants.

With the exception of mid-year transfer students, using the information from the NSLDS will allow schools to meet the regulatory requirements for obtaining FAT information for those Federal student aid applicants who have previously attended other eligible postsecondary institutions. Schools may obtain FAT information from the NSLDS through several methods including the Student Aid Report and the NSLDS History section of the University Student Information Record (ISIR). Once a school has obtained financial aid history information from the NSLDS, including using the NSLDS information on a student's SAR or in the ISIR, it will not be required to re-check the NSLDS prior to disbursing Title IV student assistance.

## 18 **Section Eighteen: Disbursement of Funds**

### 18.1 Responsibility for Disbursement of Funds

The Office of Student Financial Aid is responsible for determining when a student has met all eligibility requirements for the disbursement of financial aid funds i.e. loans, grants and scholarships..

The Business Office has the responsibility for disbursement of some scholarship checks and students with CWS Deferments. The Payroll Office has responsibility for processing CWS paychecks.

### 18.2 Separation of Functions

There is a clear and distinct separation of functions between the OFA and the Business Office (previously discussed). The Aid Office assures and maintains the accurate and appropriate awarding of aid funds. This information is submitted to the Business Office. These funds credit the student's account. Any monies in excess of charges is disbursed to the student by Business Office staff.

### 18.3 Procedures

PVAMU transfers aid to the student's account if all appropriate papers have been signed and the student is registered for the correct number of hours.

#### 18.3.1 Verification of Status

The student's eligibility status is checked by the Office of Student Financial Aid. Computer edit checks are run to ensure current eligibility before generating the financial aid disbursement roster.

#### 18.3.3 Parent and Student Endorsement

Parents and Students are required to endorse co-payable checks before funds can be released (i.e., PLUS or scholarship).

### 19 **Section Nineteen: Refunds/Repayments**

When a student withdraws from classes, he/she may be entitled to receive money back which had been paid to the University. The University may be able to **refund** all or a portion of the tuition and fees the student paid. If the tuition and fees were paid with financial aid dollars, then all or a portion of the student's refund must be returned to the student aid programs from which the money was awarded. A student who receives a cash disbursement to assist with living expenses and then withdraws, drops out, or is expelled, may be required to **repay** money to the aid programs from which the money was awarded. The University has designed the following policies and procedures to ensure proper accountability when a student leaves the University.

#### 19.1 Refund and Withdrawal Policy

Adjustments of Fees Upon Official Withdrawal: Students who wish to withdraw from the University must complete the following steps:

1. Complete an Official Withdrawal Form. You may obtain this form from the Academic Support Center, located at 3324 Barnes Street, Room 200.
2. Complete an Exit Interview with the Office of Student Financial Aid.
3. Sign a statement concerning the Return of Financial Aid Title IV funds. The Office of Student Financial Aid is located in Gandy Hall,

Room 102.

For those students who are called to “Active Duty”, you will need to complete the following steps:

1. Contact the University’s Registrar’s Office with a copy of official deployment orders.
2. Complete an Exit Interview with the Office of Student Financial Aid. Sign a statement concerning the Return of Financial Aid Title IV funds. The Office of Student Financial Aid is located in Gandy Hall, Room 102.

19.2 Tuition and Comprehensive Fee Refund Policy:

Refunds of Institutional charges including tuition, fees, room and board will be calculated based on either the Federal Return of Title IV Refund Policy or the University Refund Policy (see tables below). Students may be assessed \$100 or 5% of institutional cost as an administrative fee (whichever is less). Also, students who are on military deployment will be prorated based on the University’s policy.

Note: The Official Withdrawal Date is defined as the actual date the student began the Institution’s official withdrawal process, or the midpoint of the semester for a student who leaves without completing the appropriate withdrawal steps listed above.

19.3 Room Fee Refund Policy – The dormitory room fee is refundable only if the student’s official withdrawal date is within the first five- (5) days of the beginning of class. Students are urged to read the Terms and Conditions of the Residence Hall Agreement.

19.4 Board Fee Refund Policy- a prorated board fee will be charged for each day the student occupies the dormitory. The balance of the board fee paid will be refunded.

19.5 FEDERAL RETURN OF TITLE IV REFUND POLICY: This policy is used to calculate a refund if the student meets the following criteria.

The student is receiving Federal Title IV Financial Aid and the student's official withdrawal date is BEFORE 60% of the enrollment period. This equates to a withdrawal date on or before 9 weeks (59 calendar days) or less after the official beginning of class. For student's withdrawing after 9 weeks (59 calendar day) of classes, the refund calculation will be based on the University's Refund Policy (See Below).

OFFICIAL WITHDRAWAL DATE	% OF CHARGES TO BE RETAINED BY SCHOOL
Before the 1 <sup>st</sup> day of class	0%
Week 1 (day 1-7)	1% thru 8%
Week 2 (day 8-14)	9% thru 14%
Week 3 (day 15-21)	15% thru 21%
Week 4 (day 22-28)	22% thru 28%
Week 5 (day 29-35)	29% thru 36%
Week 6 (day 36-42)	37% thru 43%
Week 7 (day 43-49)	44% thru 50%
Week 8 (day 50-56)	51% thru 57%
Week 9 (day 57-58)	58% thru 59%
After 59 days of enrollment	100% thru 59 %

The Return to Title IV Refund Policy is based on the federal mandate that students earn federal financial aid eligibility in proportion to the amount of time the student was enrolled. The earned portion of student's federal financial aid will be disbursed to the student's account to assist in paying Institutional related expenses. The unearned portion will be refunded and/or returned to the U.S. Department of Education Title IV Programs.

**19.51 Pro Rata Refund Method:**

This policy is used to calculate a refund if the student meets the following criteria:

The student's official withdrawal date is AFTER 60% of the enrollment period. This equates to the enrollment period of more than 9 weeks (59 calendar days) after the official first day of class.



The student has not received any Title IV Financial Aid (see listing below).

These students will be issued a refund using the following guidelines. It must be noted that the "Official Withdrawal Date" indicates the number of calendar days the student is officially enrolled. This includes both the first day of class and day of official withdrawal.

OFFICIAL WITHDRAWAL DATE	% OF TUITION AND FEE CHARGES TO BE RETAINED BY SCHOOL
1-10 DAYS *	25%
11-20 DAYS	50%
21 OR MORE DAYS	100%

\*Students who officially withdraw from the University (during any session) within the first five calendar days of the beginning of classes will be charged a prorated room and board fee for the number of days in the residence hall.

Students who officially withdraw from the University (during any session) after the fifth calendar day from the start of classes will be charged the entire room rate for the semester. This requirement is also applicable to students residing in the University Apartments. Board charges will be prorated for the number of days in the residence hall. (See Residence Hall Housing and & Food Service Agreement- Item 11a).

#### 19.6 Refund Distribution for Financial Aid Recipients

Refunds on behalf of Financial Aid Recipients must be distributed in the following order:

1. Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans
2. Federal Direct Subsidized Loans
3. Federal PLUS Loans
4. Federal Perkins Loans
5. Federal Pell Grants
6. FSEOGs
7. Other SFA Programs
8. Other federal, state, private, or University sources of aid
9. The student

#### 19.7 Repayments

When a student who received directly a financial aid disbursement ceases attendance, the school must determine whether the student must repay a portion of the disbursement. If the school finds that the student's living expenses incurred up to the time of withdrawal exceed the amount of funds disbursed, the student does not owe a repayment. However, if the disbursement was greater than the student's living expenses up to the withdrawal date, the student must repay the excess amount.

Living expenses are defined as education costs above and beyond the tuition and fee charges, including items such as room and board (if the student does not contract with the school), books, supplies, transportation, and child-care expenses. Since there are 16 weeks per semester, we will allow students 1/16 of their semester living expenses for each week of attendance.

FWS wages are excluded because they have been earned. Schools are responsible for notifying and for collecting the repayment. However, a school is not liable for the owed amount if it cannot collect the repayment from the student.

#### 19.8 Unofficial Withdrawals

Students who cease attending the University without going through the official withdrawal process are analyzed during the mid-term grading process. The Office of the Registrar will submit to the Office of Student Financial Aid a mid-Term grade file of all students that received grades of N's and F's. The Office of Student Financial Aid reviews the file and determines the students who will be contacted regarding attendance. The Office of Residence Life is also provided a copy of the list to verify the affected students housing status. Students whose mid-term grades reflect all N's and/or F's are sent a letter requesting that they confirm their attendance status. The letter to the student requests that they check the appropriate enrollment status and sign, date and return the letter as to their attendance status. If the student does not comply by completing the requested information, the University will maintain the student's status as enrolled and no further action is required. If the information is received within the required timeframe, the University will indicate that the student is no longer in attendance, and the withdrawal date is recorded as the last day to withdraw from the University based on the University Calendar.

**20      Section Twenty: Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Federal regulations require the University to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory progress for the purpose of the receipt of financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. The law requires institutions to develop policies regarding satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Each institution must design criteria, which outlines the definition of student progress towards a degree and the consequences to the student if progress is not achieved. PVAMU students who wish to be considered for financial aid must maintain satisfactory progress in their selected course of study as set forth in this policy.

**20.1    Satisfactory Academic Policy- PVAMU Policy**

Any student receiving financial assistance who does not meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements during a preliminary review at the end of each semester will receive written notice of **Warning** for one semester. If during the second review at the end of the subsequent semester, the student fails to maintain the required standard, a notice of **Probation** will be sent. If during the third review the student fails to maintain the required standard, a **Termination** notice is sent informing the student that all financial assistance must be withdrawn. The student is responsible for ensuring that the grade point average and hours-earned data submitted by the Office of the Registrar are accurate and complete.

**20.11   Undergraduate Students- Grade Requirements**

An undergraduate student is considered to have made satisfactory academic progress for maintaining financial aid eligibility in a course of study if the following schedule is maintained: (**Note: A student must successfully complete 12 credit hours each semester to be considered as having made satisfactory academic progress**)

No. of Semesters of Hours	Semester <u>Completed</u> <u>Earned</u>	Minimum # <u>GPA</u>
1	1.5	12
2	1.5	24

3	2.0	36
4	2.0	48
	<u>Cumulative GPA</u>	
5	2.0	60
6	2.0	72
7	2.0	84
8	2.0	96
9	2.0	108
10	2.0	120

The Prairie View A & M University Catalog sets forth degree requirements on a four-year completion basis. However, the Office of Student Financial Aid will allow five years for completion of a 120 to 124 semester-hour degree program which will enable a student to take up to 150 hours if he/she is carrying a course load of 15 hours per semester. Federal guidelines require that a student carry 12 credit hours per semester to be considered full-time; therefore, satisfactory academic progress is based on the assumption that a full-time student must earn 12 credit hours each semester and a part-time student must complete 80 (percent) of the attempted hours.

Note: Hours earned through remedial and/or developmental courses are considered toward meeting the minimum 12 credit-hour requirement.

#### 20.12 Full-time Students

Students enrolled in 12 hours or more per semester will be allowed five academic years in which to complete a degree. Less than full-time students will be extended on a pro-rated basis not to exceed the equivalent of 10 semesters of full-time enrollment.

#### 20.13 Three-quarter time Students

Students enrolled for 9 to 11 hours per semester must earn a minimum of 18 credit hours per academic year to remain eligible to receive financial assistance.

#### 20.14 Part-time Undergraduate Students

These students enrolled in a degree program must achieve a minimum semester grade point average of 2.0 after he or she has earned and/or attempted 48 cumulative credit hours.

Except when there are mitigating circumstances, no undergraduate will be eligible to receive financial assistance for more than ten (10) semesters or the equivalent of completing a four-year program in a five-year time frame.

## 20.2 Right of Appeal

Any student whose financial assistance has been terminated may submit a written letter of appeal to the Office of Student Financial Aid explaining why satisfactory academic progress was not maintained and giving reason why aid should not be terminated. Accompanying documentation from the student's Dean is recommended.

## 20.3 Re-Establishing Satisfactory Academic Progress

After financial assistance has been withdrawn, students may re-establish satisfactory academic progress by either of the following methods:

- 1.) attend summer sessions at their own expense and improve hours and/or semester grade point average to meet the required standards, or
- 2.) attend subsequent semester at their own expense and improve hours and/or semester grade point average to meet the required standards.

Students who comply with either method should submit to the Office of Student Financial Aid a written request asking that their eligibility for financial aid be reinstated.

## **21 Section Twenty-one: Fund Management and Reconciliation**

### Requesting Funds

PVAMU request funds through the Advance Payment Method. Under the advance payment method, the Department accepts a school's request for funds and transfers the amount requested to a bank account designated by the school. The school should not request more cash than is needed to make disbursements to students with three business days.

## Maintaining Funds

PVAMU maintains a interest bearing bank account into which the Department transfers campus-based, and Pell and Loan funds. Interest earned over \$250 per year must be remitted to the Department at least once per year.

## Disbursing Funds

Financial Aid funds are disbursed when a school makes a payment of Financial Aid Funds or delivers proceeds of an loan to or on behalf of a student, either directly or by crediting a student's account with the funds. The Department considers a disbursement of Federal Financial Aid Funds to have taken place by crediting a student's account once the school has both credited the student's account and drawn down federal funds. The earliest a school may disburse Federal funds is 10 days before the first day of the payment period or period of enrollment for which the disbursement is intended.

Whenever a school credits Federal funds to a student's account, and those funds exceed the student's allowable charges, a school must pay the excess Federal Funds (credit balance) directly to the student with 14 days of the later of:

- \* the date the balance occurs on the student's account,
- \* the first day of classes of the payment period or period of enrollment, or
- the date the student rescinds his or her authorization for the school to retain funds in excess of the amount needed to cover allowable charges. day of the payment period or period of enrollment for which the disbursement is intended.

Whenever a school credits Federal funds to a student's account, and those funds exceed the student's allowable charges, a school must pay the excess Federal Funds (credit balance) directly to the student with 14 days of the later of:

- \* the date the balance occurs on the student's account,
- \* the first day of classes of the payment period or period of enrollment, or
- the date the student rescinds his or her authorization for the school to retain funds in excess of the amount needed to cover allowable charges.

## **22     Section Twenty-two: Fraud**

There are difficult situations where students and/or parents purposefully misrepresent information in hopes of obtaining or obtaining additional assistance. The OFA is required to have a policy of referral when confronted with actual or suspected cases of fraud and abuse.

### **22.1   Policy for Fraud**

Students and parents who willfully submit fraudulent information will be investigated to the furthest extent possible. All cases of fraud and abuse will be reported to the proper authorities.

### **22.2   Procedures for Fraud**

After investigating the situation, if the Director believes there is a fraudulent situation, all information must be forwarded to the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Education or the local law enforcement agency.

If the decision is made by the Director to pursue the possibility of denying or canceling financial aid, a written request to make an appointment is sent to the student. If the student does not make an appointment, the Director may:

1. Not process a financial aid application until the situation is resolved satisfactorily.
2. Not award financial aid
3. Cancel financial aid
4. Determine that financial aid will not be processed for future years.

All processing of the application or disbursement of funds shall be suspended until the Director has made a determination as to whether the student shall be required to make an appointment.

Fraudulent situations should be reported to the hotline of the Department of Education Inspector General at (202) 755-2270 or 1-800-MIS-USED.

## **Section Twenty-three: Audits and Program Reviews**

Federal regulations require the OFA to have its records and student files audited at least once every two years. Each audit must cover the time period since the last audit. PVAMU is audited annually by the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts. These audits are periodically reviewed by the U.S. Department of Education and the Southern Association of University and Schools for compliance with their policies.

Auditors review a sample of student aid files to ensure the OFA is in compliance with federal, State, and University policies. The auditors submit a preliminary memorandum of findings to the Director of Financial Aid who conducts research and prepares a response addressing resolution of the specific discrepancy and appropriate procedures to correct faulty processing. Items which are resolved are deleted from the report and the final document is submitted to the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts. The President relays a copy of the findings for the OFA to the Director. The Director has one week to submit a response to errors discovered by the Auditors. If the OFA submits a valid response to the Auditors, the discrepancy is removed from the citation report.

### 23.1 Preparation

The only preparation for the audit is to cooperate with the Auditors requests. Typically, the Auditors will randomly select a specific number of students from each of the Title IV programs. The files are pulled and given to the Auditors. Any additional assistance requested is responded to promptly.

### 23.2 Guidelines

A complete listing of financial aid audit guidelines is listed in the Audit Guide published by the U.S. Department of Education. See this reference document for additional information.

### 23.3 Liaison

The Associate Directors serves as the liaison between the OFA and the Auditor. Specific questions regarding eligibility or program requirements are addressed by the Director.