

The University of Iowa
Office of Student Financial Aid

Strategic Plan

August 2007

Statement of Mission

The primary mission of The University of Iowa Office of Student Financial Aid is to address the financial needs of students in a way that enables student access to the University of Iowa, facilitates enrollment of a well-prepared, high-achieving, and diverse student body, and encourages timely graduation rates.

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1 Assist the University in attracting, enrolling and retaining a well-prepared, diverse and high-achieving student body.

Strategies:

1. Administer University Tuition Set Aside and University-controlled private funds to support merit and need-based scholarships and grants that recognize and reward academic achievement and facilitate diversity.
2. Assess annually for the University of Iowa Foundation the amount of capital required to provide full private financial support for select scholarships and grants that are targeting well-prepared, diverse and high-achieving students.
3. Work closely with the University of Iowa Foundation to help inform and educate current and prospective donors regarding the University priority needs related to scholarships and grants.
4. Assist the UI Office of Admissions and the UI Center for Diversity and Enrichment with outreach activities on and off campus.

Goal 2 Provide access to the University for those demonstrating financial need by awarding federal, state, University, and University-controlled private funds to qualified students.

Strategies:

1. Inform students and their families annually about University financial aid policies and procedures, including the importance of timely application and timely delivery of all related required documents.
2. Meet the student's full financial need through a combination of federal, state, University and private financial aid programs.
3. Award scholarships and grants before employment and loans and award employment and loans as requested by individual student.
4. Continue to develop and enhance Jobnet, the UI Office of Student Financial Aid electronic job bulletin board, to help students locate part-time student employment opportunities that are related to their academic majors and/or minors and future career interests after graduation.
5. Develop policies and procedures to optimize the timely delivery of all student financial aid.
6. Develop programs like the Iowa Pathways Program that place special emphasis on the exceptional and special financial needs of economically disadvantaged students. Make every attempt to minimize the need to borrow for these students as borrowing remains a significant financial barrier for these low-income families.

Goal 3 Obtain continuing support from federal, state, institutional, and UI Foundation to meet the increasing financial needs of students.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate annually the changing financial need of the student body by accurately updating the cost of attendance and the family's ability to pay. Communicate to the UI President, Provost, and Vice President for Finance and University Services the need for additional University Tuition Set Aside funds. Communicate to the UI Foundation the need for additional funds to support the increasing need of existing scholarship programs and the need for additional funds to support new scholarship initiatives.
2. Communicate to University federal and state relations staff the need for continued and additional financial support from federal and state financial aid programs so that staff can be responsive to federal and state financial aid issues coming from the Iowa Congressional Delegation and state legislators.
3. Develop policies and procedures that comply with federal and state financial aid regulations and diligently fulfill the role of fiduciary of all University controlled private scholarships and grants.

Goal 4 Inform and educate the public, UI colleges, UI departments, UI Student Government, and external agencies regarding current and proposed financial aid policies and procedures and the impact on UI students.

Strategies:

1. Provide information to and seek input from the UI Financial Aid Advisory Committee; UI executive Enrollment Management Committee; University colleges and departments; and UI Student Government on issues related to student financial aid.
2. Monitor federal and state legislative proposals related to student financial aid and be proactive and responsive by working closely with UI federal and state relations staff.
3. Communicate to UI colleges and departments recommended proposals and changes in UI priorities for use of University Tuition Set Aside funds and the impact on students enrolled in affected colleges.
4. Provide information via printed material and the Web on a continuing basis to students, the public, the University of Iowa Office of Admissions, and other University departments about the application process, cost of attendance, types of aid available, and eligibility requirements for aid programs.
5. Assist in the development of the new UI MAUI student information system with input from the Director serving as a member of the MAUI Steering Committee and input from the Senior Associate Director of Systems serving as a member of the MAUI Project Leadership Committee.
6. Maintain and enhance the Financial Aid Resource Management (FARM) system and LOAN system and make available as needed to select UI colleges and departments.

Goal 5 Continue to enhance staff skills to serve as a general resource on financial aid issues.

Strategies:

1. Encourage staff participation in professional development opportunities made available through the UI, state, regional, and national professional organizations as well as through the U.S. Department of Education.
2. Ensure a welcoming office environment for all students from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds by supporting and encouraging staff participation in workshops and presentations related to socioeconomic and cultural diversity issues.
3. Provide opportunities for all staff to become informed and educated about cultural differences related to financial resource issues, including family perspectives on acquiring debt for living and educational costs.