



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE JOB DESCRIPTION

Position classification: PSA
Date created or revised: 1/18/2024
Exempt/Non-Exempt Status: Exempt
Responsible individual: Yes
Campus Security Authority: Yes

Title: Director, Student Financial Aid
Status: Full time, 35 hours/week, calendar-year appointment
Grade: 16
Union Affiliation: PSA@RIC (Professional Staff Association)
Reports To: Dean of Enrollment Management

PRIMARY PURPOSE:

The Director of Student Financial Aid is responsible for administering a complex and multifaceted financial aid program consisting of scholarships, grants, loans, emergency funds, and student employment opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Oversees all aspects of the financial aid operations; ensures overall compliance with federal, state, and institutional regulations; and manages overall data collection and dissemination for reports, surveys, and audits. Ensures the financial aid staff and operation delivers high-quality, responsive, customer-service to internal and external audiences.

The director provides leadership for the development, review, evaluation, coordination and implementation of all policies related to student financial aid services/programs. The Director serves as the college's primary source of expertise on financial aid regulations, policies and packaging of awards and coordinates financial aid activities with the functions, policies and procedures of other administrative offices, academic departments, committees, and off-campus constituencies. The director must have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of first-generation students, underrepresented students, and the necessary diversity, equity and inclusion competencies to serve the Rhode Island College community.

The Director is responsible for creating and producing statistical reports using the college's student information system. The director leads an office staff of professionals who work to provide a high-level of customer service, and works with the Enrollment Management Team and the Student Success Division to enhance enrollment, retention and success of Rhode Island College students.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Essential Job Functions:

- Plans, develops, implements, and evaluates financial aid policies and procedures to meet students' needs while supporting College enrollment goals. Administers and facilitates the awarding of new and continuing students financial aid packages which may include Federal Pell and SEOG Programs, RI State Aid and Tuition Waiver Programs, College Programs, and/or Federal Work Study.
- Coordinates financial aid file review, verification, and awarding. Ensures timely communication with students via letters, email, web, telephone calls, etc. regarding financial aid processes. Works closely with enrollment management colleagues to administer initiatives that improve financial aid outreach and responsiveness.
- Oversees the verification of specific federal and/or state criteria, authorization of payment process, and reconciliations with accounting office(s) and R2T4 in compliance with federal and state regulations and College policies. Manages the reconciliation of appropriate information with internal (e.g., Student Accounts and Business Office) and external (federal and state government) constituents, and ensures completion of appropriate reports (e.g., FISAP) and surveys (e.g., College

Board) by established deadlines. Provides scheduled reconciliations of financial aid transactions and award balances to Bursar and general ledger balances to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and integrity of fiscal records. This includes, but is not limited to, researching, troubleshooting, processing, and collaboratively resolving variances as needed.

- Manages the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Process including policy review and updates, appeal reviews, and working with appropriate College offices to create academic plans for students.
- Liaises with Admissions, Business Office/Accounting, Registrar, Residence Life, Bursar, and other offices to ensure that transactional activities are complementary and smoothly integrated. Collaborates with other College departments to ensure compliance with federal regulations not directly managed through the financial aid department.
- Provides leadership and strategic direction to staff including supervision, training, and professional development for all professional, clerical and student staff in the Financial Aid Office.
- Manages the Financial Aid office budget and oversees the processing of purchase requisitions, encumbrances, and travel reimbursements as they relate to the Financial Aid Office.
- Coordinates the College scholarship process for current students and liaises with the Dean of Enrollment Management, Director of Admissions Outreach & Recruitment, and the appropriate colleagues in Alumni Relations, and the College Foundation on scholarships for new and current students.
- Manages EdConnect, Common Origination and Disbursement (COD), and related Department of Education interfaces.
- Develops and coordinates programming related to financial aid and financing options, which includes (but not limited to) admissions recruitment events, new student orientation sessions, and financial literacy workshops. When appropriate, conducts financial aid information sessions (small and large group formats) and meets with students to communicate financial aid application procedures to students, parents, high school counselors, and community college advisors.
- Prepares statistical data/reports appropriate to the Financial Aid Office. Creates financial aid reports that align with admissions reports; compiles and analyzes socioeconomic, geographic, demographic data, and peer institution data; and creates benchmarking data on financial aid that informs/guides recruitment strategies and strategies for improving student completion.
- Coordinates the creation/evaluation of the publications, programs, and overall strategies of the Financial Aid Office. Manages and leverages technology (e.g., financial aid website pages, vendor relationships) to advance strategic financial aid objectives.
- Actively contributes to deliver a working environment that promotes optimism, collaboration, respect, solutions conscious dialogue, and exceptional service to everyone. Responsible for coordinating conscientious onboarding of new employees. Uses tact and diplomacy to gain consensus with issues that cross office boundaries.
- Strives to maintain and augment knowledge and skills in the financial aid field through advanced study, professional activities or participation in conferences, seminars, workshops and similar professional gatherings.
- Ensures that affirmative action, equal opportunity and diversity are integrally part of all actions and decisions within the scope of duties.
- Provides financial aid services to students, parents and others; models excellent customer service while counseling constituents on financial aid needs and concerns. Maintains and is responsible for specific financial aid programs and student cases.

- Conducts annual reports and assessments as needed to promote the on-going enhancement of financial aid services.
- Develops, maintains, and modifies manuals of policies and procedures to achieve enrollment goals, enhance effectiveness, and efficiency and ensure compliance with laws and regulations.
- Oversees and manage the processing of financial aid applications using best practices: determines student eligibility, performs financial need analysis, packages financial aid awards for eligible students, and hears appeals.
- Provides leadership to the continued development of data processing systems to enhance efficient and effective delivery of services and management of programs.
- Serves as the primary source of campus expertise on financial aid regulations, policies and packaging of awards.
- Participates in cross-functional working groups and campus committees, and contributes to the enrollment management team as well as the Student Success Division.

Occasional Job Functions:

Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Dean of Enrollment Management.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATION STANDARDS:

Education:

Master's degree.

Experience:

A minimum of four years of full-time experience in the administration of student financial aid services at the college or university level. Financial Aid experience must be progressively more responsible in nature and include some supervisory elements.

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities:

- Experience with Peoplesoft is desirable.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience with designing, implementing and/or refining systems for administering student financial aid programs.
- Demonstrated knowledge of federal, state and institutional financial aid policies, federal need-analysis theory and computation.
- Demonstrated analytical, communication and managerial skills.
- Ability to provide strong leadership to staff and to implement and manage financial aid policies and procedures with a focus on customer service
- Ability to represent the college positively and effectively with prospective and current students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni, outside agencies and the public.
- Possess an understanding and sensitivity to the needs of a diverse student population including first-generation and low-income students.
- Demonstrated intercultural competency, including experience using data to inform equitable and inclusive practices and policies.
- Excellent oral, written, interpersonal, and technical skills.

PREFERRED:

- Full-time experience at or above the Associate Director level.
- Bilingual in English / Spanish (fluent in speaking and writing).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

The employee is not exposed to known adverse environmental conditions.

The college requires that all applicants and employees be able to perform the essential functions of the job and will explore reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

As an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution that values and is committed to inclusion and expanding the diversity of its faculty and staff, the College invites members of protected classes, including minorities and persons with disabilities, to identify themselves as such at the time of application.