

President's Corner



We are excited to publish 2017's first edition of the FAS Compass. It features a Client Case History of

University of Texas at Tyler (UT-Tyler) and a profile of our consultant Peggy McLendon, who served as UT-Tyler's interim director of financial aid for nearly a year. Peggy has been a part of the FAS family for nearly 20 years and assisted dozens of clients. Also, we want to take the opportunity to welcome some of our newest clients. It will be a pleasure working with them. Helping clients achieve their goals has been our mission of the last 26 years.

Our compliance team has some important and timely updates. They include news about Gainful Employment reporting and the release of our 2017-2018 Verification Compliance Checklist. We also have some unique tips for enrollment management professionals. The patterns we have seen in students' responses to financial aid requests may hold a key to increasing yield and removing barriers for students who truly need help.

There are several welcomed additions to the FAS family. Last month, James Blackburn began as the Executive Director of our PAVE (Paperless Automated Verification Engine) Solution. James holds a Six Sigma Black Belt in Software Quality. He will lead several initiatives in process improvement with a project management approach. Previous

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FAS Helps Maintain, Enhance Operations at UT Tyler

Challenge

The University of Texas at Tyler (UT Tyler) is a centerpiece for learning and culture located in East Texas, midway between Dallas and Shreveport, LA. With nearly 10,000 students, UT Tyler is one of the fastest growing universities in the University of Texas System. When the university's financial aid director of 19 years resigned with two weeks' notice, deadlines were looming and reports were due. At the recommendation of a colleague, UT Tyler turned to FAS for expert leadership and interim staffing.

Solution

"We did not have the breadth of leadership knowledge needed to maintain the office and compile the federal reports," said Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management Sarah Bowdin. "FAS Consultant Peggy McLendon arrived very quickly to serve as interim financial aid director. She assessed the situation, determined the needs for improvement, delegated tasks, began implementation and got us on the right path." Ray Ceo, a second FAS consultant, joined McLendon and helped with the Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) and reconciling the Federal Work Study Program. During her six-month stay at UT Tyler, McLendon worked with the university's budget and business offices on reconciliation and implementation of new processes related to the university's Oracle



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NASFAA National Chair, Dr. Laurie Wolf has joined the ranks of FAS' consulting staff, after retiring from Des Moines Area Community College in December. Dr. Wolf will provide Assessments and Consulting Services. Our clients will benefit from her decades of experience, specifically in the community college setting. We are also pleased to announce Kathy Hill's return to FAS. After giving retirement a try, she resumes her role as Vice President of Consulting and Interim Staffing.

We are excited to announce a brand new and dynamic FAS website coming soon. Connecting with us online will be an even easier and more engaging experience whether you are using a PC, smartphone or other mobile device. The new website is scheduled for launch later this month. We will send out a special announcement, inviting you to visit the website and give us feedback.

Finally, in 2016 we wrapped up our yearlong 25th anniversary celebration. What a year it was! It allowed us to reconnect with clients, colleagues and friends, some who were with us from the very beginning and all along the way. The many congratulatory words from around the higher education community were heartwarming and humbling. Thank you for your interest and support of FAS and enjoy this edition of FAS Compass. As always, if there are topics you would like addressed in an upcoming edition, feel free to contact me directly.

David Gray
President

P.S. Stay tuned for exciting announcements about an upcoming partnership and new services to bring innovation and expertise where they are needed most!

FAS Helps Maintain, Enhance Operations at UT Tyler continued from page 1

PeopleSoft conversion. She also helped interview candidates for the financial director position and offered useful feedback before the final selection.

Results

Bowdin noted how FAS listened to UT Tyler's needs and sent an experienced, professional who was the right person for the job. "Peggy provided the leadership direction we needed during these difficult times," said Bowdin." She kept the employee morale high and trained our staff to provide excellent customer service. As a result, we were able to comply with all reporting deadlines, and successfully administered financial aid for our students with positive survey results during spring registration. She not only helped maintain our office, but also enhanced our overall operation."

Compliance Corner

Hundreds of Programs Fail to Meet Gainful Employment Rule

More than 800 programs, 98 percent of which were offered by for-profit institutions, failed the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) accountability standards for its new gainful employment rule. They now risk the loss of federal financial aid funds, reports The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Having graduates with annual loan payments that exceeded 12 percent of their total earnings, or 30 percent of their discretionary income, these programs failed to meet required standards. Around 1,200 programs received a "zone" rating, because their graduates' annual loan payments were 20-30 percent of discretionary income or 8 to 12 percent of total earnings. According to ED's guidelines, programs failing in two of three consecutive years, or that are given "zone" ratings for four consecutive years, are ineligible to receive Title IX student aid funds.

This is ED's first time measuring programs against the debt-to-earnings benchmark in the rule, reported the Chronicle. It is unclear whether the new administration will continue to enforce the regulation.

<http://www.chronicle.com/blogs/ticker/over-800-programs-fail-education-dept-s-gainful-employment-rule/116378>

Consultant Profile

Peggy McLendon has over 23 years of experience in higher education, working in both the private and public institutions. Since joining FAS, Peggy served in acting financial aid director and/or associate director positions for dozens of clients. Additionally, she has assisted clients with responding to program reviews and audits, including file reconstruction projects.

Prior to joining FAS, Ms. McLendon worked as a trainer and financial aid content specialist for a technology firm specializing in Oracle PeopleSoft ERP implementations. Peggy developed and delivered training for new users and worked closely with team members to create training materials for each new PeopleSoft SA patch and release.

For more than a decade at Emory University, Peggy was a senior financial aid administrator. She managed federal and private loan processing, performed verification, monitored Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) and Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), performed cross-functional training, and played a key role in the implementation of Oracle PeopleSoft's Financial Aid Module. She has an extensive knowledge of need analysis, using both federal and institutional methodologies.

Peggy has experience with various financial aid systems, including Oracle PeopleSoft, Ellucian (SunGard) Banner, Ellucian (Datatel) Colleague, College Board PowerFAIDS, and the U.S. Department of Education's suite of technology products such as the EDEXpress software, the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) and the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).



During her financial aid career she has been a member of the Georgia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (GASFAA), the South Carolina Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SCASFAA) and the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SASFAA).

Peggy received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Spelman College.

What's In The Numbers

In over 26 years, we have seen many trends in higher education that were shaped by financial aid. Each year, students go through the application process. Unfortunately, hundreds of those students never go any further. Financial aid offices typically send a request for information but do not actively recruit these students. Data we have monitored for several years shows a direct correlation between early action and high interest level. Students who respond quickly to a financial aid information request, even from a college where they haven't applied or been admitted, are expressing excitement about the institution.

Also, some colleges have measures financial aid applicants must take beyond the federal requirements. Recent research suggests the result is fewer students enrolling and a heightened possibility of non-compliance with the federal regulations. For colleges that award a significant amount of institutional aid, additional information may be

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necessary. If a college primarily offers federal grants, loans and student employment, using standard federal requirements has multiple benefits. This simplifies the process for the students and helps to eliminate access barriers. It also reduces the possible liabilities associated with extraneous and conflicting information.

FAS works closely with our clients to help administer financial aid in a manner that is compliant and student-friendly. Contact us about assessing your overall process or to discuss offloading some of the most time consuming parts of your operation.

The FAS Compass

March 2017

Welcome New Clients

We warmly welcome some of our newest clients. Our entire staff looks forward to working with them and being part of their successes.



Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing



Cornish College of the Arts



Chippewa Valley Technical College



Jackson State University



University of Mary



Northwest Florida State College



Parker University



Pierpont Community and Technical College



Southern Connecticut State University



Shippensburg University

The FAS Verification Compliance Checklist

Our 2017-2018 Verification Compliance Checklist is now available. Click here today to request your copy free of charge.

<http://financialaidservices.org/resources/request-information>