

FAS Helps Ocean County College Optimize Financial Aid Operations



Situation

Ocean County College (OCC), a two-year public college in Toms River, NJ, was struggling to administer financial aid effectively. The college was receiving numerous student complaints about award delays, the financial aid director and assistant director had been released for poor performance, and the office was behind on important state and federal reporting. Compounding the problem, the financial aid staff was not fully utilizing the college's computer system, relying instead on inefficient processes and a hard-copy filing system that was causing numerous delays and errors.

Challenge

With such significant process delays, many students were not receiving financial aid awards in time for registration. Such inefficiencies were affecting enrollment at OCC, where nearly three quarters of its 9,300 students required financial aid. The college needed leadership that could help its floundering financial aid office optimize technology, increase efficiency, and improve student service.

Solution

When FAS assumed responsibility for managing the financial aid office, one of its consultants served as the college's interim director of financial aid for eleven months. The consultant quickly enacted a plan centered around full implementation and utilization of the college's computer system to improve student service and boost efficiency. Once policies and procedures were established and staff hired and trained, the backlog in reporting and aid awards was rectified. By the end of the 11-month contract, FAS had helped OCC hire a full-time director and assistant director, fully staffing the department for the first time.

Results

With guidance from FAS, OCC now has a financial aid department that runs effectively and efficiently. Enrollment at the college is up, student complaints have been significantly reduced, state and federal reporting is on time, the office is fully staffed, and financial aid applications are processed in just three weeks rather than the months it took previously. The college is fully utilizing its computer system to automate financial aid processes. Another desirable outcome has been increased communication and collaboration between college departments with financial aid as an agreed-upon institutional priority.

“After working with FAS, we went from being a rudderless ship to one with extremely competent management, cutting edge technology and professional operating standards.”

Dr. Jon Larson
President
Ocean County College

+ For additional information about services provided by FAS, call our Client Relations Team at 770.988.9447 or email us at info@FinancialAidServices.Org