2025 ANNUAL REPORT OF PROGRAM DATA



UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I®
HAWAI'I
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2025 Annual Report of Program Data Financial Aid Office

1. Program or Unit Mission

The mission of the Hawai‘i CC Financial Aid Office (FAO) is to assist current and prospective students fund their educational goals through efficient, accurate, and timely administration of Federal, State, University of Hawai‘i System, institutional, and external financial aid programs.

2. Program Student Learning Outcomes or Unit/Service Outcomes

Due to the ongoing alignment project within the UHCC System that seeks to make most financial aid policies and procedures as similar as possible within and amongst all seven UH community colleges (UH CC’s), the FAO’s goals and outcomes are mostly developed and established at the UHCC System level. Codependent methods are used for the administration of all major financial aid programs, which means that most outcomes are heavily dependent upon the progress and success of the UHCC System Financial Aid Office. Moderate improvements to local processing and related responsibilities can and have been implemented at the school level, but major decisions that could meaningfully improve the quality of the services provided by the FAO and its ability to execute its mission are not able to be implemented independently. The FAO meets regularly with the UHCC System Financial Aid Office and the other UH CC’s to discuss and implement changes and improvements, and advocates on behalf of Hawai‘i CC, its students and staff, and other stakeholders.

3. Analysis of the Program/Unit

Challenges and Accomplishments

From July 1st, 2024 to June 30th, 2025, financial aid operations have steadily improved over prior years, facilitated in part by the hiring of two full-time APT Financial Aid Specialists in September and October of 2024. With these critical positions filled, operations and dependability have become more stable and fewer office responsibilities have been deprioritized or left incomplete. At this time, the FAO has one permanent full-time APT position to fill. In the interim, a casual-hire Financial Aid Specialist has been hired to assist with projects and tasks, including but not limited to: processing returns of Title IV funds (R2T4), forms modification and upkeep, creation of promotional materials, outreach, and customer service.

Despite improved internal conditions as a result of better staffing, FAO operations developed and/or led by the UHCC System Financial Aid Office continue to be suboptimal in terms of accuracy and efficiency - they still require unnecessary follow-up, review, and coordination. Many procedures that historically would have been managed and completed solely by the school are separated into individual tasks and split between the FAO and the UHCC System Financial Aid Office. This separation of duties results in scheduling conflicts and confusion, delayed processing, duplication of efforts, and micromanagement. Other than accomplishing the goal of aligning certain procedures amongst the UH CC’s, there are few ongoing benefits to the co-dependent processing relationship between the UHCC Financial Aid Office and the FAO. Most regular tasks could be more effectively administered at the individual school level, if provided adequate staffing, technological support, and other applicable resources.

Financial Aid Office

Multiple aspects of the non-processing relationship between the UHCC Financial Aid Office and the FAO are either helpful or could be if modified and built upon. Examples include: organizing and funding opportunities for financial aid managers and staff to meet and discuss items of importance; supplying funding for in-person training, both locally and in the continental US; creating and maintaining required policy and procedures manuals, operational calendars, queries, and reports; advocating for financial resources and executing contracts with third parties to fulfill unmet obligations; creating, updating, and streamlining Banner tracking and packaging scripts and settings to improve upon past automation efforts and reduce the need for manual review before, during, and after Banner jobs are executed; etc.

Facilities

All Welcome Center building repairs and improvements previously requested and approved remain unresolved. The air conditioning system has not been replaced and inconsistently cools the building, resulting in temperatures that are either too hot or cold in one area, even if as-desired in others; no security cameras have been installed; the front doors of the Welcome Center still do not shut and are not accessible for people with disabilities or others who may be unable to push or pull them open; and the fire alarm continues to inappropriately trigger due to indeterminable circumstances.

Annual Single Audit

Hawai‘i CC is subject to a full or simple institutional audit on an annually rotating basis. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, a full audit was conducted and no findings were issued.

Award Summary

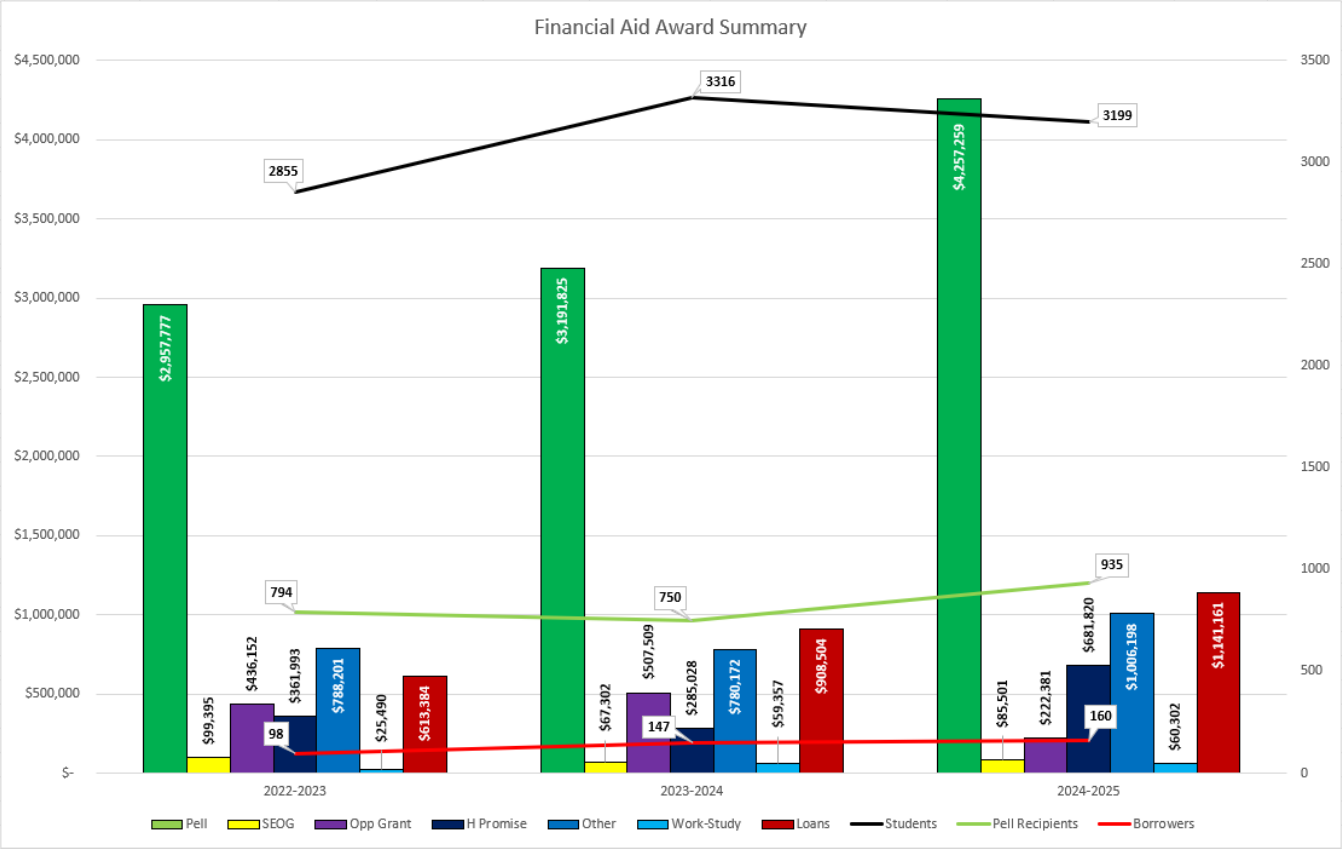
For the 2024-2025 school year, the FAO awarded, processed, and/or disbursed the following funds:

- Federal Pell Grant: $4,257,259
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG): $85,501
- Institutional Opportunity Grant: $222,381
- Hawai‘i Promise: $681,820
- Other Grants and Scholarships: $1,006,198
- Federal Work-Study: $60,302
- Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Student Loans: $1,141,161

As shown in the chart below, Pell disbursements continue to increase year over year, up 33.38% in 2024-2025 over 2023-2024, from $3,191,825 to $4,257,259; as do loan disbursements, up 25.61%, from $908,504 to $1,141,161. At the same time, Hawai‘i CC’s total unduplicated headcount, determined in accordance with FISAP reporting requirements, decreased 3.53%, from 3,316 to 3,199; the total number of Pell recipients increased 24.67%, from 750 to 935; and the total number student borrowers increased 8.84%, from 147 to 160.

Changes to Pell eligibility formulas, which were first implemented for the 2024-2025 school year, remained the same for 2025-2026. From 2024-2025 to 2025-2026, Pell disbursements, loan disbursements, Pell recipients, and student borrowers increased, but the total number of students decreased. This continues a trend from prior years, suggesting that the financial need of Hawai‘i CC’s student population is rising. Additionally, more students are borrowing more, which is partially a result of the changes to loan offering practices that began in 2022-2023 – offering loans up front as opposed to waiting for students to seek out loans themselves – but may also be correlated with the increasing need of the student population.

Financial Aid Office



Cohort Default Rate

Hawai‘i CC’s Cohort Default Rate (CDR) for the latest published cohort – students who entered repayment from 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2024 – was again 0% as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic payment pause. Since student loan repayment is no longer paused, CDR’s for all institutions that participate in the federal student loan programs will increase. Due to mass confusion and transition regarding student loan repayment options and processes at the US Department of Education (ED) level, among many other challenges, schools may see CDR’s that exceed pre-pandemic levels moving forward. Until the data for students who first entered repayment after the pause is reviewed, finalized, and published by ED, it will not be possible to determine the impacts of the pause and subsequent national repayment re-entry.

To assist with student loan default management and prevention, which directly affects Hawai‘i CC’s eligibility to participate in the Federal Title IV programs, the UHCC System Financial Aid Office has entered into a contract with ECMC Solutions to provide free student loan counseling and borrower support for current and former UH CC students. ECMC is actively performing outreach to borrowers currently in repayment, with a particular focus on those who are in delinquent or defaulted status. Preliminary information from ECMC for the first cohort to enter repayment after the pause indicates that Hawai‘i CC’s CDR will be below the 30% threshold that would result in escalating consequences to the institution.

Additional information regarding default management is available on the FAO’s Financial Aid Policies web page, under the “Default Management” heading.

4. Action Plan

The FAO continues to work on previously-listed items that are within its control:

- Collaboration and coordination with the UHCC System Financial Aid Office, other campuses, and external partners continues to be necessary to ensure compliance and efficiency of services provided or managed by the FAO.
- The broken or dysfunctional building components of the Welcome Center still remain unreplaced or unrepaired.
- Two permanent full-time Financial Aid Specialist positions were hired, leaving only one currently-available FAO position unfilled.

One new challenge has arisen because the UH System uses each campus's Administrative Cost Allowance (ACA) fund to help pay for the required annual audits. As a result, ACA allocations to the FAO have been reduced year-over-year. Moving forward, it is expected that the FAO will not receive any additional ACA funding because of increased audit costs and other purposes for which the System uses ACA funds. According to campus needs and as required regulations (see Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 2, Chapter 3, "Adequate Staffing" heading), the FAO must have an adequate number of well-trained staff to provide financial aid counseling and other related services to students. Because financial aid laws, regulations, and policies frequently change – particularly at the federal level, but also at the state, UH System, and campus levels – to maintain compliance, it is critical that funding be available for travel and other costs associated with financial aid training, conferences, and professional development opportunities, both within the State of Hawai‘i and in the continental United States. Accordingly, in addition to some items carried forward from prior years, the FAO will be working with the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA) to ensure that funds for financial aid training are available each year.

For the 2025-2026 fiscal period, the FAO's goals and action items are as detailed below. Some items have been carried forward from prior years due to their ongoing nature, but some items that affect the FAO are not within its control to resolve.

1. Work with the VCSA to hire one additional permanent full-time Financial Aid Specialist.
2. Maintain working relationships and work collaboratively with the UHCC System Financial Aid Office – and other campus or external partners – to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
3. Fix broken or dysfunctional Welcome Center building components, including the front entrance and the malfunctioning fire alarm system. Replace the air conditioning system, as recommended by various vendors and consultants.
4. Work with the VCSA to ensure adequate funding for training, conferences, and professional development opportunities – including travel and associated costs for events within the State of Hawai‘i and in the continental United States – to maintain compliance with regularly changing laws, regulations, and policies.

5. Resource Implications

Special Resource Requests not included in your operating "B" budget

I **AM** **requesting additional resource(s) for my program/unit.**

Total number of items being requested: 3

Item Description:

1. Welcome Center building improvements and repairs by 6/30/2022.
2. Hire one permanent full-time Financial Aid Specialist by 6/30/2025.

3. $10,000 annually, in addition to the FAO operating budget, for financial aid training conferences and events, including travel and associated costs.

Justification:

1. Welcome Center building improvements and repairs were requested in the 2022 FAO AUR and approved but have not been completed.
2. The request made in the 2024 FAO unit review to hire one permanent full-time Financial Aid Specialist was approved but has not been completed.
3. Compliance with federal, state, and institutional laws, policies, and regulations is required to participate in the federal Title IV financial aid programs and to administer state and institutional funds. Financial aid requirements frequently change in substantial ways and having well-trained staff is essential for both operational and compliance purposes. The FAO has historically relied on its ACA to pay for costs associated with financial aid training, but that funding source has been dwindling as the UH System takes a larger cut year after year for audit and other purposes not related to training; it has also been unofficially confirmed that most campus financial aid offices will be receiving very little, if any, of their ACA moving forward. The costs, including registration and travel for typical financial aid events, either in Hawai‘i or in the continental United States, has in the recent past ranged from about $3,000 to $5,000 per person. With less than $10,000 per year, it is unlikely the FAO would be able to send more than one person to a training event per year, and if the ACA money is not replaced at all, there will be no more funds available for financial aid training after this fiscal year. It is also not possible for one person to convey all necessary information to other coworkers, as each program area is highly specialized and an in-depth understanding on an individual basis is necessary to avoid making mistakes, including those that could lead to audit findings.

Alignment to the Ka‘ao Ka‘ika‘i Strategic Plan AY2023 - AY2029

1. Previously approved.
2. Previously approved.
3. Funds for Financial Aid Training
    - **Ka‘ika‘i Kuleana** – Fulfill kuleana to Native Hawaiians and Hawai‘i Island
        - Financial aid increases access to education by reducing the financial burden of school costs and/or living expenses so that they can afford to attend. Compliance with federal, state, and institutional laws, regulations, and policies is mandatory for institutions that offer student financial aid. In order to maintain compliance, it is imperative that the FAO has enough funds to send staff to training events at least annually. This is especially important moving forward as laws and regulations – and even institutional policies – change more and more frequently.
    - **Ka‘ika‘i Haumana** – Develop successful students for a better future
        - Same as response for Ka‘ika‘i Kuleana
    - **Ka‘ika‘i Oihana** – Meet Hawai‘i Island’s workforce needs of today and tomorrow
        - Same as response for Ka‘ika‘i Kuleana
    - **Ka‘ika‘i Kauhale** – Build and maintain the wellbeing of the college kauhale
        - Same as response for Ka‘ika‘i Kuleana