

STAGE 1 – DESIRED RESULTS

Unit Title: Financial Aid Literacy and Understanding Financial Aid

Established Goals: Use technology, expert testimony, and project-based assessments to produce, publish and update individuals on the importance of financial literacy and how it leads to a successful lifestyle.

Understandings: *Students will understand the importance of financial aid and how it relates to financial literacy.*

- Financial aid is federal funds administered to the school by the Depart of Education
- Financial aid funds consist of grants, loans, veteran affairs assistance, and scholarships
- Specific funds are provided to certain students based on packaging requirements such as GPA, Rank, and need based eligibility.

Essential Questions:

When should I submit a FAFSA application?

How many hours do you need to enroll to receive financial aid?

How much I can expect in grant monies?

How long does the awarding process take?

Can I receive aid for double major and minor at Lamar University?

What is entrance counseling, and master promissory note?

Students will know:

They must meet the basic eligibility criteria to received federal aid

They must be in good standing with Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards for financial aid

They must have a qualifying EFC (Expected Family Contribution) as determined by the FAFSA

They must not exceed the 600% Pell Lifetime Eligibility Used Limit

Disbursements occur no earlier than 10 days before the student's first day of class

Students will be able to:

Apply to Lamar University by visiting Apply Texas

Apply for Financial Aid by completing a FAFSA or TASFA

Monitor your Lamar University accounts (email and self-service banner) for updates

Complete your Financial Aid requirements listed on Self-Service Banner

Accept your awards on Self-Service Banner

Complete any additional Financial Aid requirements listed on Self-Service Banner for financial aid disbursement

STAGE 2 – ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE**Performance Tasks:**

- Staff should be able to process aid packages efficiently, in an accurate and timely way.
- Make timely disbursements of aid to all eligible students, this way students will not be dropped from their courses for non-payment
- Provide quality advising services by addressing individual student needs, responding to student inquiries in a timely manner (such as emails or calls) and providing quality publications

Other Evidence:

- MyLamar, our student portal, provides access for payment, viewing emails, unofficial transcripts and more.
- Small group and whole group discussions
- Collaborative counseling sessions with peers and discussions that are shared via representative to provide reflections and
- Practice giving positive, constructive, and helpful feedback using project-based study handouts to present financial guidance

Key Criteria:

Financial aid counselors are there to ensure students choose the best finance option available. They are responsible for packaging award offers, and counseling students regarding grants, loans scholarships and any other aid available.

STAGE 3 – LEARNING PLAN**Summary of Learning Activities:**

1. Begin with understanding Financial Aid Basics – (grants, loans, scholarships)
2. Introduce the essential questions and discuss the culminating unit performance task. (Participate in activities to discuss that reveal the students' individual attitudes and beliefs about fixed and Growth Mindset where they land in that self-evaluation)
3. Our office will host FAFSA nights at the local high schools in the area. Parents as well as future college students will be able to ask questions and learn the fundamentals of financial aid
4. Reflective analysis and development of personalized plans will include important deadlines and due dates for payments
5. Reports will be running to ensure aid is disbursed in a timely manner
6. There will be open discussions and counseling sessions administered through our money management program for students who need assistance with their finances
7. Money Management will schedule financial seminars via zoom and in person to establish expert testimony
8. Money management will host financial literacy courses that will teach students the skills they need to be financially successful in college and what is yet to come soon.

The UbD template is divided into three stages 1. Identity desired results, 2. Determine acceptable evidence, and 3. Plan learning experiences and instruction (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005. p.18). Within the third stage, one uses what the authors call the “WHERE TO” elements. This helps teachers to assess how will the design:

W = Inform students about **Where** the financial aid funds are going, **what** will be expected of the students

H = **How** do I **Help** students maintain their SAP conditions to continue to receive aid?

E= Equip students with the knowledge they need to be successful, help them **Experience** the key ideas and **explore** the issues?

R= Provide opportunities to **Rethink** and **Revise** their understanding of financial literacy?

E= Allow students to **Evaluate** their finances and its implications?

T= Be **Trainable** to new and different needs, interests, and capabilities of student’s situations

O= Be **Organized** to maximize initial and sustained engagement as well as active learning (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005. p22)?

As a financial aid counselor, I am told what information needs to be presented to the student. From there, I am required to find the best approach to which my student understands the financial aid process and from there can choose the best option for them. In a course that I am taking, EDLD 5313 we have been looking at a broader view of student learning instead of focusing on what information the students are learning. In this course, I have been introduced to different types of plans to develop a unit or lesson which implement the big picture of the lesson.

While introducing some worksheets to my students, such as the project-based plan and Fink’s 3 column table; I look at several different situational factors that might affect my student’s financial situation. I developed activities I thought would meet the goals of my students as well as help them to be financially literate. The worksheets helped me determine what activities and assessments need to be used based on the outcome of the course. After reading Wiggins and McTighe’s Understanding by Design (UbD) (2005) I felt like I had a better idea of how to pull the entire counseling season together than I got from Fink’s 3 column table. UbD provided an educator and counselor approach to taking all the pieces and putting them together to help students reach the goal. Which is Success!

When comparing the UbD and the 3-column table, both begin with the goal of the course in mind. The 3-column table has you work backwards from the goal while UbD pulls together several aspects of learning to obtain the goal. I found that UbD provided more detailed instruction on creating a significant plan for the session. The plan is to keep students engaged and understand the importance of financial literacy.

References:

Fink, L. D. (2003). *A self-directed guide to designing courses for significant learning*. Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (expanded second ed.). Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.