

ANNUAL UPDATE QUESTIONS

I - MAIN

Overview

Academic Year: 2025-2026

Originator: Bostwick, Kelli

Division: Office of VP Student Services

Department: Financial Aid

II - CO-CONTRIBUTORS

- 1) Banuelos, Irma
- 2) Click or tap here to enter text.
- 3) Click or tap here to enter text.
- 4) Click or tap here to enter text.
- 5) Click or tap here to enter text.

III - ANNUAL UPDATE

On the [PIPR website](#), locate and review your previous program plan and subsequent annual updates. After reviewing, enter your previous goals below and provide an update.

Previous Goals: Increase number of students who receive Pell grant by 5%.

End of Year Goal Status: In-Progress

Please describe your status (No more than 200 words). This is a goal in progress, as we are consistently working to increase our Pell numbers. 23-24 - 1581 24-25 – 1789 25-26 – 1508 (to date). This goal should be met by 6/30/26, which is the last day for 25-26 FAFSA applications.

Did you request the same resources the previous year? If so, what was the result? Has there been a significant change since your request? While resources were requested in the previous cycle, the department's capacity has diminished as a result of the increase in student enrollment and the additional campus. This stagnation is critical as enrollment has increased nearly 40% to 11,319 students, officially surpassed pre-pandemic levels and increased volume of Financial Aid files and inquiries. Furthermore, the January 2025 opening of the Hollister Campus mandates consistent on-site support at a second location, a requirement that cannot be fully met with existing personnel. With nearly half of the student body relying on aid and the added complexity of federal FAFSA Simplification mandates, the current workload—now spread across two campuses with fewer staff—necessitates immediate additional resources to maintain compliance and student service standards.

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New Goal (Optional)

- Goal (*One Sentence Limit*): Optimize financial aid delivery by increasing FAFSA and California Dream Act (CADAA) completion rates through targeted outreach and equity-focused workshops, ensuring students maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to support persistent enrollment and timely completion of degrees, certificates, and transfer goals.
- Alignment to Strategic Goal Goal 1: Student Success, Completion, and Transfer - To provide a structured and supportive pathway for students to successfully complete their academic and career goals.
- Alignment to SLO or SAO (*Enter Department SLO or SAO that aligns to this goal*): Students will demonstrate an increased awareness of financial aid opportunities and deadlines, leading to a higher percentage of students receiving the Student Success Completion Grant (SSCG) and other aid that fosters full-time enrollment (15+ units).
- Describe the connection of Goal to Mission Statement, Strategic Plan and SLO/SAO Results: Gavilan College Mission: Directly fulfills the mission of "equitable access" by removing financial barriers for students of diverse backgrounds, empowering their academic and economic potential. Strategic Plan: Aligns with Strategic Goal #1 (Increase Achievement) by providing the "robust support services" and "intentional interventions" necessary for students to stay on their academic pathway. SAO Results: Based on data showing that students who do not complete financial aid files are at higher risk of dropping out, this goal targets the improvement of file completion for marginalized populations
- Proposed Activity to Achieve Goal: Launch a "Financial Aid Completion Campaign" featuring bilingual (Spanish/English) "Cash for College" type workshops and proactive "Nudge" notifications (such as emails, text messages, phone call, etc.) for students at risk of losing eligibility due to SAP Maximum Timeframe limits.
- Responsible Party (One Sentence limit): FA Director and FA staff.
- Timeline to Completion: Semester/Year: By the end of Fall 2026.
- How Will You Evaluate Whether You Achieved Your Goal (Two sentence Limit): Measure the year-over-year increase in the number of completed FAFSA/CADAA applications and the percentage of students successfully regaining eligibility through the appeal process.

Additional Comments:

Click or tap here to enter text.

IV - RESOURCE REQUESTS

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1. Request Name (short title): 1 Full Time Classified Professional Position for FA.
2. Request amount: \$130k

3. Type of Request: Personnel
4. Alignment to Goal(s) in section XIII (*enter goal from above*)Click or tap here to enter text.
5. Is this a one-time or ongoing expense? Ongoing
6. Category of Request

If Personnel is Selected in question 3, select from the following all that applies.

- Full-Time Faculty ☐
- Part-Time Faculty ☐
- Faculty Special Assignment or Reassigned Time ☐
- Full-Time Classified Professional ☒
- Part-Time Classified Professional or Student Worker ☐
- Full-Time Manager, Supervisor, Confidential ☐
- Part-Time Manager, Supervisor, Confidential ☐
- Professional Experts ☐

If non-personnel are Selected in question 3 select from the following all that applies.

- Instructional Equipment ☐
- Instructional Software ☐
- Instructional Supplies, Materials and Textbooks ☐
- Non-Instructional Equipment ☐
- Non-Instructional Software ☐
- Non-Instructional Supplies and Materials ☐
- Professional Development ☐
- Travel and Conference ☐
- Professional or Contracted Services ☐
- Repairs and Maintenance ☐
- Other ☐

7. *The committee will separate goals with resource requests. Requests will be categorized into two groups: those to be ranked and those not ranked. The requests not ranked include Safety, Compliance, Personnel, and Position.*

Which of the following best describes your requests?

Personnel and Position: Requests that involve hiring, staffing, or reclassifying full-time or part-time faculty or staff. These requests are reviewed and approved through a separate process by the Faculty Staffing Committee or the Executive and Leadership

8. Provide a complete description, justification, or rationale for the requested amount. Describe how it aligns to the selected goal(s) and your responses to the above questions. (300 words)

This justification supports the funding of one Financial Aid Specialist to ensure institutional compliance, improve student retention, and manage the increased complexity of federal aid administration and the additional campus coverage needed.

The Financial Aid Specialist will be responsible for the technical administration of Title IV funds, including complex eligibility verification, needs analysis, and the processing of Professional Judgment appeals. This role serves as a critical bridge between regulatory requirements and student access, overseeing the accurate disbursement of Pell Grants, Federal Work-Study, and state-specific aid programs.

- **Compliance & Audit Protection:** Current staffing levels are stretched beyond the threshold of "Administrative Capability" defined by the Department of Education. An additional specialist is vital to mitigate the risk of processing errors that lead to federal audit findings, fines, or the loss of Title IV eligibility.
- **Student Persistence:** Financial barriers are a leading cause of student attrition. This position allows for personalized counseling and faster processing times, ensuring that high-need students receive timely aid offers and "just-in-time" support during financial crises, directly impacting enrollment and retention rates.
- **Regulatory Workload:** Recent mandates, such as the FAFSA Simplification Act, have fundamentally altered awarding formulas and reporting requirements. This position is necessary to absorb the resulting increase in manual data review and system testing without compromising service quality.
- **Operational Stability:** By rebalancing caseloads, the institution can reduce the high turnover and burnout rates currently impacting the financial aid sector. This proactive staffing model secures institutional knowledge and prevents the costly recruitment cycles associated with staff departures or burnout due to the additional workload assigned to staff, due to an increase in our student population and the addition of a new campus.

The funding requested covers a competitive base salary and benefits, ensuring the department can attract a specialist with the technical expertise needed.

V - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Please provide a brief executive summary regarding program trends and highlights that surfaced in the writing of this report. Summarize, using narrative, your program goals for this year. Your audience will be your Peer Review Team, the program review Committee,

President’s Cabinet, Dean’s Council, ASGC, Academic Senate, Budget Committee and Board of Trustees (300 words or less).

Gavilan College has entered a period of rapid expansion, yet the Financial Aid department is operating with fewer resources than in previous years.

- 40% Enrollment Increase: Unduplicated headcount has risen from 8,070 (2021-22) to 11,319 students for the 2024-25 academic year, officially surpassing pre-pandemic levels.
- New Hollister Campus: The opening of the Hollister site in January 2025 has doubled the department's physical service footprint.

This funding is designated for a Full-Time Financial Aid Specialist to restore operational stability and drive student success.

- Base Salary: \$80,000 per year (appx).
- Total Cost: ~\$120,000 (including benefits and retirement).
- Operational Support: \$10,000 for bilingual "Cash for College" workshops and "Nudge" notification outreach.

The request directly supports Goal 1: Student Success, Completion, and Transfer by removing financial barriers to enrollment.

Objective	Impact on Students
Increase FAFSA/CADAA Completion	Targets 55% of students who currently do not receive federal grants.
Maximize SSCG Awards	Guides students toward the Student Success Completion Grant (SSCG), which awards up to \$8,000/year for those taking 15+ units.
Ensure SAP Compliance	Provides 1-on-1 counseling to help students maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and avoid losing aid eligibility.
Equitable Multi-Site Access	Allows for additional financial aid presence at the Hollister campus for San Benito County students.

The Risks of Inaction

- Increased Student Attrition: Students who fail to complete financial aid files are at the highest risk of dropping out.
- Compliance Vulnerability: Managing the complex FAFSA Simplification and Student Aid Index (SAI) updates with reduced staff increases the risk of processing errors.

- Service Inequity: Without dedicated staff, the Hollister campus cannot provide the support necessary for its diverse student population.
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Recommendation: Approve the \$130k request to bridge the capacity gap, ensuring that Gavilan's growth is matched by the student support services required for completion and transfer.

VI - ATTACH FILES (optional)

If there is any additional information regarding your program that you would like to have uploaded, please attach it here.