

Charter: Task Force on Award Notification & Consumer Information

November 2011



Chair: Doug Levy – Macomb Community College

Members:

- Anthony Sozzo – New York Medical College, Member of the NASFAA Graduate & Professional Issues Committee
- Ben Burton – Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana
- Dan Davenport - University of Idaho, Chair of the NASFAA Federal Issues Committee
- Diane Stemper – The Ohio State University
- Eileen O’Leary - Stonehill College, NASFAA Board Member
- Michelle Stipp – DeVry University
- Myrna Perkins – Barton Community College
- Nancy Hoover – Denison University
- Paula Luff – DePaul University, NASFAA Board Member
- Terri LeGrand – Wake Forest University

Commission: Examine best practices in award notification and report back to the NASFAA Board of Directors with recommendations on how to improve or standardize elements of an award notification.

Goals:

- Identify best practices for award notifications
- Identify best practices for dissemination of award notifications
- Develop glossary of standard terminology
- Gather examples of award notifications and consumer information disclosures that illustrate best practices, to serve as resources for other institutions
- Liaise with the Technology Committee to determine whether on-line notifications require different considerations than paper formats
- Liaise with admissions, the business office, and registrar's office to understand different points of view on award notifications
- Map a campaign to raise awareness among institutions of need to implement best practices
- Prepare a presentation for the membership to be delivered at the 2012 NASFAA Conference
- Provide the Board with recommendations on effective elements, principles, and role of the award letter
- Provide the Board with recommendations for minimizing the quantity but maximizing the effectiveness of student consumer information

- Provide the Board with recommendations regarding the desirability of model formats and whether different models would be needed

Timeline:

In-person meeting	January, 2012
Engage other interested organizations	January/February 2012
Identify best practices	January/February 2012
Sample award letters	January/February 2012
Recommendations to the Board	March/April 2012
Awareness campaign	April/May 2012
Conference presentation	July 2012

Background:

Congressional action

In Sec 484 of the HEOA, Congress directed the Department of Education (ED) to:

- (1) Convene representatives from groups that are affected by or involved in the award notification process to offer recommendations for improvements to financial aid offer forms;
- (2) develop a model format for aid offers which includes information specified in the HEOA;
- (3) Submit recommendations to Congress.

Department of Education action

- Notice published in the [Federal Register](#) on July 29, 2011, announcing Model Financial Aid Offer initiative, including a [web page](#)
- Public meeting held September 13, 2011
- “Know Before You Go” initiative in conjunction with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau announced, including proposed [financial aid “shopping sheet”](#)

NASFAA action

- In late summer, NASFAA submitted [comments and suggestions](#) on award letters to ED through their public solicitation process.
- Justin participated in a [panel discussion](#) during ED’s 9/13 meeting and discussed [NASFAA’s position on award letters](#) (position being that in general, we should avoid overall standardization and instead focus on standardizing key terms and elements). NASFAA tools for evaluating award letters reworked and updated, and released in preparation for meeting.
- In early November, NASFAA solicited samples of award letter materials from the state and regional leaders’ listserv.
- In November, Board moved to create Task Force.
- [Award Notification Web Center](#) created on NASFAA.org.