



Project Overview Statement

Executive Summary

Project Title: E-mail notify when students' FA status changes
Project ID: 22
Project Leader: Marcia Conliffe
Department: Student Affairs
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PROJECT BUSINESS CASE

Project Overview

Provide Student Financial Services with a means to automatically notify students by e-mail when a change in their status occurs. The e-mail should go to their BCC e-mail account and be triggered by an award, a denial, a new document request etc. Preferably this would be a dynamic process where students are e-mailed daily once they meet the above stated criteria, instead of having to wait for a number of students to be batched and contacted weekly, for instance. A second e-mail should be triggered if the student fails to respond, the ideal time period between these two correspondences being approximately a month. Relatively student-specific e-mails are desirable, but something as close to that as possible would be acceptable. For example, "You have been awarded F.A." as opposed to "There has been a change in your status"; the former is more favorable. Credit and Collections already has an approved project to provide this ability, and there is sufficient overlap that both could be addressed together with a modicum of customization. If student is receiving e-mails from multiple departments/sources there should be "dump" point so inbox does not get full. The ability of Financial Aid to determine if student has opened e-mail would also be beneficial.

- Student is awarded/denied, student gets e-mail sent to BCC e-mail address
- Document request is posted in Financier, student gets e-mail sent to BCC e-mail address
- Program checks to verify if student has responded. If 'false' after a specified period, send second e-mail.

Business Goals

This approach is in keeping with the direction of the rest of the college. Bulk mailings are more and more eschewed by an increasing number of departments. The cost of these mass mailings is unjustifiable when one realizes that e-mail is the preferred medium of communication for a burgeoning number of students and the necessary technology is universally available.

- A sizable reduction in postage costs. Attendant budget funds could be more wisely appropriated.
- More effective contact with students. Depending on how current a student's mailing address is on our system their mail could be returned; this represents wasted postage. A returned e-mail costs nothing, and if students' in-boxes are maintained as previously suggested (with a "dump" feature) everyone should receive our correspondence on the first attempt.
- Timely contact with students. Conventional mail sometimes takes 2 or 3 days just to clear

our system before ultimately getting into the external mail flow. The office of Financial Aid has deadlines, some federally mandated, and the students would be far more apt to meet these deadlines given additional time. E-mail is instantaneous and doesn't "cheat" the student of response time.

Success Factors

The main success factors for this project are as follows:

- **Ability to identify students whose status has changed.**
- **Ability to identify students who have not responded to initial e-mail and send follow up.**
- **Ability to determine if student has opened e-mail.**