Service Program Assessment and Planning Report

Missouri Valley College

Year: 2011-12

Service Program: Business Office  Supervisor: Greg Silvey

Mission:

The mission of the Business Office is to provide exceptional service to students, parents, faculty and staff and to support Missouri Valley College’s educational goals through the efficient assessment of student fees, collection procedures and receipting of institutional funds.

Goals:

The service goals of the Business Office are:

- Helping students to meet their personal financial responsibilities by providing courteous service regarding their student accounts
- Assisting students in obtaining their educational goals by providing an affordable and convenient method of payment
- Providing accurate statements to students with knowledgeable service and assistance
- Maximizing the collection of delinquent student accounts
- Efficiently handling the posting of institutional funds

Service Outcomes:

The desired results of the Business Office service program are:

- Increased satisfaction from students, parents, faculty and fellow staff members with the performance of the Business Office staff
- Students reaching their educational goals with convenient and affordable payment methods
- Delivery of timely and accurate student billing statements
- Reduce outstanding student receivables
- Timely and efficiently posting institutional funds

Service Delivery Map: (attached)
Staff/Clientele/Program Information

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Missouri Valley College

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Service Program: __Business Office______________________ Supervisor:  Greg Silvey

IV. Staff/Clientele/Program Information

Table 1. Staff Profile

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Full time</th>
<th>Part time*</th>
<th>GA Full time</th>
<th>GA Part time*</th>
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<td>Number of program staff by gender</td>
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<td>male</td>
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<td>6-10 2</td>
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*Part time is defined as 20 work hours a week or less.
Assessment Tools:

The Business Office staff chose the delivery of timely and accurate student billing statements to students and to reduce outstanding student receivables as the service outcomes most important to be assessed at this time. These assessment tools were also chosen last year, but we feel that the billing and delivery of student statements timely and accurately and reducing outstanding student receivables are very important areas that need to be constantly addressed and attempted to improve.

Delivery of timely & accurate student billing statements – classified as an indirect measure of assessment. Student surveys are analyzed, software provider is consulted to develop more easily understood student statements, and periodic staff meetings are held to discuss billing statement problems.

Reduce outstanding student receivables – classified as a direct measure of assessment. Year-end balance reports are maintained to compare current year performance to past years, and collection agency reports are reviewed to compare the percentage of balances collected for current year to past years to make sure that they collection agency is performing to anticipated expectations. Close contact between the CFO and other department heads is maintained to determine the best collection procedures.

Summary of Findings:

- **Delivery of timely & accurate student billing statements** - At the end of the Spring 2012 semester, students were directed to complete a satisfaction survey that is available on the Business Office site of the Missouri Valley web page. Of the 51 students who actually completed the survey, three were dissatisfied with the student billing statements. The complaints received were that we were unhelpful, but when students are unable to pay their bill and have no other resources, there is little we can do to fix their problem. We work with students on an individual basis when payment problems arise, but collecting receivables is also a priority. The Business Office had another change in personnel this year, and it takes some time for training and understanding of our billing process. Initial student billing was done on July 6, 2012, and weekly after the initial billing for students who were not enrolled at that time. With the addition of the online check in process this year, more students completed the registration process earlier than in the past. Informal meetings with the Business Office staff were held periodically to discuss the review of student statements to insure accuracy before the statements are mailed and the importance of being helpful and courteous.

- **Reduce outstanding student receivables** - A comparison of the current student receivables from the Spring 11 semester to the Spring 12 semester was performed. Total account receivable balances for all classifications of students, including current,
delinquent, former students, dual credit students and accounts at collections increased from the end of year 2011 to the end of year 2012. A new collection agency was added and accounts are being placed there as they become delinquent. As in past years, many of our collection problems arise from students who withdraw during the semester and students earning all “F’s” during the semester and aid having to returned. As enrollment continues to go up it is feasible that the amount of uncollected balances will also continue to increase.

**Level of Achievement of Goals:**

- **Delivery of timely & accurate student billing statements** - Students were initially billed for the semester on July 6, 2012. After manual review of the statements, they were mailed to the students who were enrolled at that time the second week in July. There were still a large group of students who had not completed financial aid, paid their down payment, signed a housing contract or enrolled full-time. All of these conditions have an impact on the accuracy of the student statement. EDC was hired to implement a billing customization to eliminate the billing problems that we experienced with different types of students (i.e. graduate students, on-line students, face to face students taking on-line classes, dual credit students) This customization was supposed to eliminate some of the manual billing procedures, but instead led to more billing problems. The Director is continuing to work with EDC on this customization with the hopes that it will be working for the Spring 2013 billing. Student fees were changed for the 2012-13 school year to bill resident students and commuter students the same fee. This change improved the accuracy of the student statements.

- **Reduce outstanding student receivables** - As the outstanding accounts receivable balances increased, the level of achievement of that goal was not satisfactory. During the Fall 2011 semester and the Spring 2012 semester the number of students left with an outstanding balance due MVC again increased. We are hoping that the new collection agency that we began using will have better collection results, as we continue to place numerous student accounts with our collection agency.

**Analysis:**

After analyzing the service program findings and the level of achievement of the goals from the programs that were assessed, the accuracy of the statements remains a huge priority. Bi-weekly meetings are being held with the CFO to discuss billing procedures and ways to get information to students faster. The online check-in process implemented Fall 2012 was a great success. Reducing outstanding student receivables is also an area of great concern. Every effort is made to collect as much
as possible from students who leave the college and owe an outstanding balance. Earlier contact with the students and timely placing of accounts with collection agencies is being strictly followed.

**Action Plan:**

- **Delivery of timely & accurate student billing statements** - The Director of the Business Office will continue to work with EDC on the billing customizations. Billing statements will be sent as quickly as possible after July 1, 2013, with instructions included on options for full payment and payment plans. Our biggest problem is students who enroll late, do not pay their down payment on time, fail to complete housing contracts, and fail to complete the financial aid processes. All of these processes have a direct impact on the accuracy of the student billing statement.

- **Reduce outstanding student receivables** - The Business Office presently has only one other full time employee in addition to the Director and a part-time employee working approximately 25 hours per week. The CFO has suggested trying to utilize other department personnel during their office’s slower times. We continue to spend time categorizing the types of students who have outstanding balances, making contacts with students to attempt to collect or set up payment plans for student accounts with balances before they are sent to a collection agency, and sending out more timely statements to delinquent accounts. Discussions with the CFO concerning better procedures for collections will continue.