

Student Financial Aid Advising Plan

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Enrollment Management/Financial Aid Advising

Policy Owner: Vice President of Enrollment Management

Effective date: September 2026

Approval date: July 2026

Schedule for Review: Fall 2027

Policy Summary:

This policy establishes how Fort Lewis College will provide financial aid advising to the student population in alignment with institutional goals and applicable accreditation standards, ensuring equitable access to higher education and appropriate support for students with demonstrated financial need.

Policy Statement:

1. Commitment to Access and Equity

Fort Lewis College is committed to providing access to educational programs and services for students who do not have the means to self-finance their education—referred to as students with demonstrated financial need. This commitment aligns with:

- **Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria for Accreditation:**
 - **1.C:** Understanding diversity and inclusion in access
 - **3.D:** Provision of adequate student support services
 - **4.C:** Commitment to retention, persistence, and completion
- **Higher Education Act of 1965**, as amended
- **34 CFR Part 668** – Student Assistance General Provisions
- **34 CFR Part 682** – Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program
- **34 CFR Part 685** – William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program
- **34 CFR §668.42 - §668.48** – Student consumer information requirements

2. Financial Aid Advising Practices

Fort Lewis College fulfills its responsibility to provide transparent and equitable financial aid advising through the following strategies:

a. Cost Transparency

- Present clear and accurate information about the full cost of attendance, in accordance with **34 CFR §668.43(a)(1)**.

b. **Eligibility Outreach**

- Conduct targeted outreach to inform students of their eligibility for financial aid and help them understand the implications for their net price of attendance, consistent with **34 CFR §668.43(a)(2)** and **668.44**.

c. **Personalized Advising**

- Assign each student a financial aid counselor and ensure students are aware of this service as part of individualized support under **34 CFR §668.300 et seq.** (Entrance and Exit Counseling Requirements).

d. **Financing Plan Review**

- Inquire about students' financing plans and notify those with inadequate strategies of the risks of non-payment, including the potential for default, collections, and negative credit reporting, in accordance with **34 CFR §668.14(b)(11)** and **§668.35**.

e. **Academic Progress and Pathway Advising**

- Counsel students on efficient academic pathways to promote timely degree completion, supporting compliance with **34 CFR §668.34** (Satisfactory Academic Progress standards).

f. **Loan Literacy and Debt Management**

- Assist students in understanding their total student loan debt and long-term financial implications, aligned with requirements for entrance and exit counseling under **34 CFR §685.304** and **§682.604**.

g. **Regaining Aid Eligibility**

- Inform students who have lost financial aid eligibility of their appeal options or corrective steps needed to regain eligibility, in accordance with **34 CFR §668.34(c)**.

1. **Compliance and Accreditation Standards**

This policy supports institutional compliance with relevant federal, state, and accreditation requirements, including but not limited to:

- a. **Higher Learning Commission (HLC)** Criteria for Accreditation
- b. **Federal Title IV** regulations governing financial aid advising, student loan counseling, and consumer disclosures
- c. **State of Colorado Department of Higher Education** guidelines on student support and financial transparency
- d. **Equity and access requirements** under the Higher Education Act and related federal statutes

2. **Student Financial Advising Plan Oversight**

A Student Financial Advising Plan is maintained by the Division of Enrollment Management in collaboration with the Controller, Director of Assessment, and grant-funded programs that support Pell-eligible and underserved student populations.

- a. The initial plan was established in April 2016, with required annual updates each April.
- b. Implementation primarily reallocates existing institutional resources, but requests for additional funding must follow Budget Committee protocols.
- c. The plan is assessed annually with performance data reported to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Continuous improvement is guided by outcomes aligned with **34 CFR §668.16** (Administrative capability).

Compliance and Accreditation Standards

This policy supports institutional compliance with the following regulatory and accreditation frameworks:

- **Federal Regulations (Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965):**
 - **34 CFR §668** (Student Assistance General Provisions)
 - **34 CFR §682 & §685** (Loan Programs)
 - **34 CFR §668.42–§668.48** (Consumer Information)
- **Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria for Accreditation**
- **State of Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) Financial Aid Guidelines**
- **NASFAA Standards of Excellence** in financial aid administration and student advising

Policy Enforcement and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every five years by the Division of Enrollment Management in consultation with:

- Office of Financial Aid
- Institutional Research
- Student Affairs
- Academic Affairs

Revisions and updates will be submitted to the President's Cabinet for approval and documented as part of Fort Lewis College's accreditation and Title IV program review materials.

Definitions:

(Optional)

Procedures:

(Optional)

Cross-Referenced Policies:

(Optional)

Consequences of Non-Compliance:

(Optional)

Review and Revision History:

Policy developed and approved September 2025.

Policy updated to reflect 2026-2027 award year.