MASFAA 2021
Connecting Our Community: A Festival of Financial Aid

Session Descriptions

Pre Conference Workshops

Empathetic Listening: Tips to Recover and Recharge
Manda Riley, University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine

As financial aid professionals, we are often asked to flex our empathetic listening superpowers. However, without proper boundaries and self-care, empathetic listening can quickly become difficult to recover from. This session will explore empathetic listening and how to identify and honor our boundaries and limitations as helping professionals. Led by a social worker turned financial aid advisor, we will explore techniques to recover and recharge, take care of ourselves, and become more in tune with how our experiences impact student support.

Understanding and Preventing Microaggressions
TBD

In many team environments, daily exchanges between team members encompass a wide variety of personalities with varying degrees of conversation. Unconsciously and unintentionally, comments from one team member may offend another resulting in the commission of a “microaggression.” Typically, these microaggressions arise from assumptions or stereotypes about an individual or group of people base their race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation and age. This session will improve awareness of microaggressions by facilitating opportunities for participants to discover common examples of everyday microaggressions as well as develop ways to avoid the remarks that tend to offend and create unwelcoming environments.

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Interest Sessions

Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding and The Financial Aid Office

Alisha Cederberg, Kalamazoo Valley Community College; Helen Faith, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Michelle Trame, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and James Vincent-Dunn, Franklin College

From CARES to CRRSAA to ARP listen to a panel of colleagues from within the region discuss the methodology, distribution, and reporting of student and institutional emergency funding. The discussion will also include institutional use of Governor Education Emergency Relief Funding.

Building a process with your Registrar for Enrollment Reporting

Britni Caruso and Timothy Martin, St. John's College

Providing timely and accurate status information on student financial aid recipients to the education finance industry and the Department of Education's National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) in addition to resolving any errors requires collaboration between financial aid and the Registrar. Engage in a discussion on best practices to ensure Enrollment Reporting for Student Aid Compliance.

The Role of Financial in SEM Planning

Karen Goos, Kansas State University

A Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan is aligned with a University's Strategic Plan and reflects the entire student life cycle. Listen as Kansas State University speaks to their SEM-Initiative, focused on the entire student journey and engagement from recruitment and admissions, through the educational experience, through post-graduation. Key to continued success is broad engagement from the campus community, including students, faculty and staff.

Engaging Campus Community in Consumer Information

Maureen 'mo' Amos, Northeastern Illinois University

Let's have some fun exploring this rather complex topic of consumer disclosures, compliance, and action plans followed by discussion on how to engage campus partners on a regular basis.

Unofficial Term Withdrawal - Financial Aid and Registrar Partnership

Maureen 'mo' Amos and Dan Weber, Northeastern Illinois University

Listen to a book-end approach from Northeastern Illinois University facilitated by both the University Registrar and Financial Aid Offices to confirm active student participation in coursework. Processes include roster verification, registration for un-enrolled, notification of withdrawal dates for non-attending, outreach to faculty for last date of active participation, and two failing grades - a never attended (NAF) and unofficial withdrawal (UWF).

How to Effectively Serve Online Students

Portia Gilmore and Melissa Sersland, Northwestern University; Sara Lambie, IU Online

The needs of online students differ from those of in-person students. At the same time, financial aid administrators encounter unique challenges serving students across time and distance. Learn how staff at Indiana University Online and Northwestern University are collaborating across their institutions to establish multiple touchpoints throughout the student lifecycle. This discussion will review research on adult learners and online students and will discuss how IU Online and Northwestern are leveraging their learning management systems, websites and yes, even phone calls, to engage their students. Learn best practices for working with distance education students and make sure to share your own strategies!

Incorporating Business Efficiencies

Chris Lopac and Alex White, University of Wisconsin-Madison

UW-Madison's Office of Student Financial Aid is continuously looking find efficiencies and improve upon business processes. This session will take a look at different tools / software being utilized by UW-Madison to streamline the student experience, while also building more efficient processes for the OSFA team.

Building and Managing Credit

Deb Gossman, College Ave Student Loans

We understand that establishing good credit is vital to financial health. Our students often begin to build credit in college, beginning with a student loans and moving on to other trade lines such as a credit card or a car loan. But do they really understand the impact that every day decisions have on their credit score – and why it is so important? This session will cover a myriad of topics related to credit and credit scores with a focus on the downstream impact of credit decisions for students. Tools and tips will be provided that will help you counsel your students on this important topic.

Role of Academic Advising in SAP Appeals

Marvin Smith, University of California-Los Angeles

What Happened? What Changed? This session will explore the roles of Academic Advising and the Financial Aid Office in the appeal process for Minimum Standards of Academic Progress or SAP. Academic Advisors play a critical role in coaching students through academic plans, degree audits, and other corrective measures to boost persistence and completion.

Financial Education and Issues of Student Inequity

Matthew Nettleton, Inceptia

As financial education advances, we can see that not all financial conversations are created equal. Our students can face issues of social injustice or inequity, which may inhibit their ability to fully engage with our efforts. This intersectionality of finance and inequality makes it incumbent upon us to address these barriers to move the discussion forward.

Attendees will learn about issues regarding the gender pay gap, the racial wealth divide, and food insecurity and homelessness by reviewing an overview of leading data and research; identification of issues of inequity pertaining to race, gender, and socioeconomic status; and ideas and implementation strategies for incorporating these topics into financial education programs.

How America Pays for College

Donette Cassman, Sallie Mae; Krisi Bhaumik, University of Michigan

Each year, families sending a child to college make decisions on how to pay. In this session, we'll share results from Sallie Mae's 13th Annual "How America Pays for College" national research study. Our research conducted with Ipsos, shines a light on how families make paying for college decisions and the funding sources they use.

Trends in Higher Education

Jill Gosse, Sallie Mae; Alisha Cederberg, Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Our discussion will review trends in areas such as enrollment, cost of attendance, private student loans and federal grants and loans. This presentation will also review recent studies on the value of a college education. In addition to reviewing opinions on if college is worth it, the results also touch on average debt, payment-to-income ratios and average annual income by education.

The Other Side of the Desk: How to Let Your Child Choose a College

Chad Olson, Iowa State University; Melissa Van Meter, Ohio University

You're an enrollment management professional and a parent? This session is for you! Two financial aid professionals will share their experiences going through the college cycle with their children. Even if your child goes to your institution, you'll learn a lot during your turn "in the funnel". You'll learn when to step in, and more importantly, when to step back! We will also explore how to be a good colleague and not take advantage of your knowledge and professional ties.

Juggling Personality Types in the Office Environment

Manda Riley, University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine

This fun, interactive session will discuss varying personality types in the office environment. Utilizing psychogeometrics, we will explore techniques to best connect, manage, and communicate with others on our team. Learning about our shapes can help to improve seemingly incompatible relationships, gain self-awareness, and promote better communication. Applicable for all levels of professionals who wish to improve their ability to connect and support others.

Appreciative Advising: Deliver What your Students Need

Michael Crider, Jonathan O'Hara, and Natalie Shrestha, Dakota County Technical College

An interactive conversation overviewing Appreciative Advising and how your Financial Aid Office can use this tool to have students be better prepared and act earlier by taking the fear out of the financial aid process and prime them for success.

Building Self-Care Into Your Work Day

Melissa Sersland, Northwestern University

Have you ever forgotten to eat lunch, sat in a two-hour long meeting without a bathroom break or felt overwhelmed by your to-do list? Then this session is for you! This session will review some best practices from higher education professionals in how they organize their work day, keep track of their to-do's and build in personal time for self-care. Since everyone has different roles, learning styles and skill sets, this session will provide a broad range of tools that will allow attendees to try what works best for them.

What's in a Debt Letter

Karla Weber Wandel, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Dr. Zach Taylor, Trellis Company

Although extant research has suggested financial aid-related materials may be difficult to read for prospective student audiences, no studies have focused on the difficulty of a student debt letter. Such a gap in the literature may be understandable considering the relatively short period of time in which debt letters have been written and disseminated to student audiences. As a result, Zachary Taylor and Karla Weber Wandel will be presenting their preliminary study results that seek to understand how difficult debt letters are to read, how long they are, how semantically-diverse these letters are, and what are some best practices we can glean from this research to make future improvements.