



**New Classified Hiring/Position Justification**

**Hiring Division/Department:** Enrollment Services/Financial Aid      **Position Title:** Financial Aid Assistant

**Classification**

Position type: Permanent x      Full Time 100      # of months 12  
Part Time \_\_\_\_\_      % of Full Time \_\_\_\_\_      # of months \_\_\_\_\_

Position: General Funds \_\_\_\_\_  
Allocation: External Funds\* \_\_\_\_\_      Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Budget Information**

Grade 22A      Step 1      Annual Salary \$ 53,820 + ben.

**Justification**

Please respond to the following questions in electronic format to the appropriate Dean, Manager or Vice President. Additional information may be provided as relevant for position justification.

1. Describe the specific needs for the position requested and the duties of this position in a brief statement.
2. Explain how this position aligns with and supports the mission and strategic goals of the college.
3. Explain how adding this position will strengthen the department or division.
4. Explain how this work will be accomplished if the position is not filled.

Please submit completed Classified Position Hiring/ Position Justification electronically to the responsible administrator in your division or department.

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**This position has been reviewed by the department or division and is recommended for hiring.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dean / Director / Hiring Supervisor**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

1. Describe the specific needs for the position requested and the duties of this position in a brief statement.

The Financial Aid Department is seeking funding to hire a permanent fulltime Financial Aid Assistant. This important position is needed to provide consistent professional staffing at our front counter, support the administrative and clerical needs of the office, and maintain and supplement our capacity to engage in the numerous initiatives across the campus and in our community where financial aid expertise is needed.

For several years, we have relied on Federal Work Study students to maintain front counter coverage during the majority of our open hours. As helpful as they are, our student employees are limited in the level and scope of work we can have them perform. This past year, we were fortunate to receive funds to hire a short term hourly Financial Aid Assistant and the impact on the overall office environment has been extremely positive. We have been able to better balance office workload, improve communication both internally within the office and externally to our customers that includes students, staff from other departments and colleges and the public. Our Financial Aid Assistant has helped us better triage students and families who need more direct service and support and reduce the number of times students return to our front counter because the information they received from a student assistant was incomplete.

The ability to serve and support the diverse needs of our students often relies on the ability of the staff member to ask the right questions which is a skill derived from extensive training and experience which underscores the need for a Financial Aid Assistant, particularly as the first contact students and families may have with our office. Given the current social climate affecting many of our immigrant students and their families, it is even more important that we provide a well-trained, socially aware staff member at our front counter. We do not want to lose this level of service.

2. Explain how this position aligns with and supports the mission and strategic goals of the college.

The College is committed to providing an educational space that is transformative for the communities we serve. Having access to this social imperative is becoming more and more challenging for our highest need students as the cost of living continues to rise and the socio-political climate is generating increased fear and uncertainty to those in our service area. Having a professional staff member as a first point of contact is key for connecting our potential students with programs and services and strategies for success. This is in alignment with both Completion Objective 2.3 and 2.5 that affirms our commitment to orient students to the broad menu of the services we provide and connecting them to the most appropriate given their circumstances. The addition of a fulltime Financial Aid Assistant, much like other front line staff in Student Services, is needed to ensure students who come to our office are also being connected to EOPS, DRC, TRiO, Puente, the Dream Center, BTO, etc. as well as all of the other "matriculation" activities generally associated with student services.

3. Explain how adding this position will strengthen the department or division.

The addition of a permanent Financial Aid Assistant strengthens our department by placing a well-trained staff member as the initial point of contact. There is a great deal of fear and stigma around financial aid. The addition of a permanent staff member who is able to build trust by providing consistent and complete information in an environment that is welcoming and supportive will help our department remove these barriers that inhibit students and families from disclosing personal information that may increase their access to financial aid or other services.

A Financial Aid Assistant has the capacity to review complex student data and respond fully to inquiries from students who may have lost eligibility for the Board of Governors Fee Waiver, need assistance enrolling in one of the disbursement options or have stale-dated or lost checks and other administrative issues a student employee cannot address. Another permanent staff member also helps our department to be more responsive to the numerous requests we receive for participation in on and off campus initiatives.

The Financial Aid Department receives multiple requests annually through Outreach to present information sessions and deliver application workshops in our feeder high schools. Financial Aid plays an integral role promoting and supporting our Promise Scholars Program, the Dream Center and Dreamers Task Force, Study Abroad, COLTS Academy, PEP, CBET, Proactive Registration, SparkPoint, Transfer Services, NSF/STEM Center Scholars, and more.

New statewide initiatives also highlight the importance of financial aid as they roll out including expanded support for homeless youth, promoting fulltime enrollment through completion initiatives and the recently legislated California Promise.

**4. Explain how this work will be accomplished if the position is not filled.**

Without some level of permanent staffing for our front counter, the Technicians will continue to have to share responsibility for covering the front counter when student coverage is not available. The current staffing model is unsustainable given the increasing demand for financial aid presence in the different initiatives both on campus and in our service areas. It is a challenge on the department to provide adequate service when we have more than one person out of the office. Having a reliable and consistent Financial Aid Assistant in the office and assigned to some of these initiatives will balance workload and maintain quality service at our front counter.

Without reliable front office coverage, we will continue to have staffing issues arise should a student assistant call in sick, need study time or change their class schedule. Any of these issues require an adjustment in everyone's schedule to accommodate coverage needs.

Current staffing is as follows:

- 1.0 FTE Financial Aid Director
- 1.0 FTE Financial Aid Technical Support Specialist
- .33 FTE Financial Aid Reconciliation Specialist
- 3.75 FTE Financial Aid Technician