



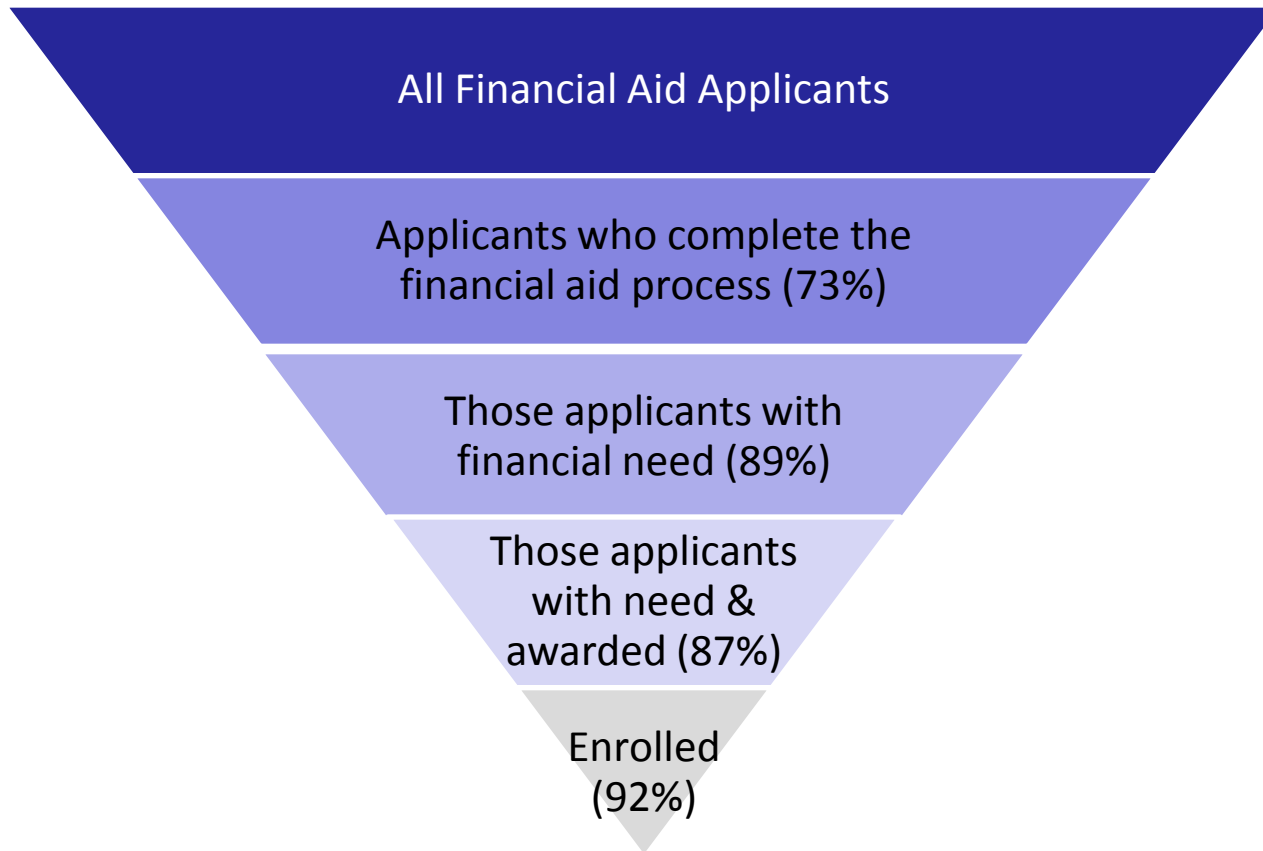
# Red Tape, Road Blocks, & Rigmarole: Identifying & Eliminating Obstacles to Student Success

Tom Bradham  
Gennaro DeAngelis  
June 19, 2009

# Agenda

- Financial Aid Access AND Success
- National Perspective
- CT Community College Data
- Where Do We Go From Here?

# Financial Aid Access & Success





*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## Financial Aid Access & Success

- Recent national action & conversation suggests a movement towards increased access to federal sources of financial aid for a broader population of college students.
- Important to both understand the direction in which Federal Student Aid policy is moving and ensure that our policies, procedures & practices are in line with the new administration's goals.



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## National Perspective

- Over the past two years, the government has issued both statutory and regulatory language aimed at increasing access to federal student aid programs.
- The College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA)
- The Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act of 2008 (ECASLA)
- The Higher Education and Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA)
- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Federal Stimulus Bill)
- Fiscal Year 2010 Federal Budget
- In addition, the Department has issued “Dear Colleague” guidance that addresses means by which College administrators may increase access to Federal Student Aid.



# National Perspective

- **The College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA):**

Eliminated several sources of untaxed income from federal needs analysis (e.g. welfare benefits, social security)

- **The Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act of 2008 (ECASLA):**

Increased both the aggregate and annual limits for Federal Stafford Loans

- **The Higher Education and Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA):**

Significant direction to simplify the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), including reducing items on the form by 50% & moving towards IRS data matching

Requires the development of an EZ FAFSA, specifically for those students who qualify as auto-zero EFC or simple needs analysis

## National Perspective

- **The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Federal Stimulus Bill):**

Provides \$30 billion of additional funding for financial aid to the Department of Education

More than \$17 billion is provided to increase the maximum Pell Grant award to \$5350 in 2009-2010 and \$5550 in 2010-2011 & eliminate annual funding shortfalls

Provides an additional \$200 million for work-study

- **Fiscal Year 2010 Federal Budget:**

Fund increases to aforementioned Federal Student Aid programs in part by eliminating subsidies to Federal Stafford Loan lenders. This is done via the proposed discontinuation of the Federal Family Educational Loan Program (FFELP) and subsequent transition to 100% Direct Lending. The administration's goal is to ensure the "entitlement" nature of Pell Grants.



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## National Perspective

- On April 2 & May 8, 2009, the US Department of Education issued “Dear Colleague” letters addressing matters relevant to increasing access to Federal Student Aid Programs

### April 2, 2009

- Reminded Financial Aid Administrators (FAA) as to their respective authority in reevaluating financial need for those students in extenuating circumstances due to the current economic environment
- Urged FAAs to not only practice professional judgment with those students who request reevaluation, but to actively seek out those students who may benefit from the practice

### May 8, 2009

- Notified FAAs of state lead initiatives to inform recipients of unemployment benefits as to their potential eligibility for Federal Student Aid Programs, especially Pell Grant. Relaxed the documentation standard for the reevaluation of eligibility in such circumstances
- Outlined adjustments to the Department’s risk-based assessment model used for selecting institutions to be federally reviewed. The new standard will be used for both 2008-2009 and 2009-2010



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## National Discourse & Recommendations

Those joining the national debate surrounding the issues pertaining to why community college students do not apply for financial aid as frequently as their counterparts at more traditionally defined colleges & universities include the following:

- The US Department of Education
- The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance
- The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS)
- The College Board
- The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
- The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)



# Connecticut Community College Data

- The relative success of financial aid delivery systems of the Connecticut Community Colleges has been well documented since the 2000-2001 implementation of Banner. However, it has for the most part occurred within a systemic context, thus creating a need for analysis on the institutional level.
- This need was further conceptualized as an opportunity to examine the degree to which financial aid is imbedded or “infused” within the dynamics at our respective colleges. Factors to be analyzed included both those directly related to financial aid practices as well as those related to a broader enrollment management framework.
- The resulting self-study of 2008-2009 data lead to the creation and calculation of a “Financial Aid Infusion Index” (FAII).



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## Financial Aid Infusion Index (FAII)

- The Financial Aid Team at the System Office acts as a Service Bureau to the twelve colleges, providing policy and regulatory analysis in addition to technical infrastructure. Additionally, it processes and houses a tremendous amount of data relative to financial aid programs.
- The primary objective of the FAII is to determine factors, both organic as well as self-imposed, that either promote or hinder access to financial aid programs, and by the extension, the colleges themselves.
- The extent to which financial aid is woven into the fabric of the college is dependent upon many factors, including the college's relative success in eliminating silos with regard to various services to students.

## Financial Aid Infusion Index (FAII)

- The FAII is a calculated index determined by comparing statistical measures representative of factors indicative of financial aid permeation at a given college as well as consideration of mitigating factors relevant to financial aid.
- It is a quantitative method that measures the degree to which financial aid infusion on a given college campus is present, despite various obstacles that may exist.

# FAI Components

- The first component of the FAI revolves around an effort to measure financial aid permeation at a given college. This effort consisted of examining the relative impact of the following three standards:
  1. Financial Aid applicants measured as a proportion to unduplicated headcount students (credit only)
  2. Financial Aid recipients measured as a proportion to unduplicated headcount students (credit only)
  3. Funds disbursed per unduplicated headcount student (credit only)



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## Financial Aid Permeation Components

College	Applicants	Recipients
Asnuntuck	37%	21%
Capital	91%	53%
Gateway	61%	34%
Housatonic	72%	40%
Manchester	56%	29%
Middlesex	54%	31%
Naugatuck	52%	28%
Northwestern	42%	23%
Norwalk	41%	26%
Quinebaug	64%	43%
Three Rivers	60%	34%
Tunxis	49%	26%



*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## Financial Aid Permeation Components

College	Financial Aid per Headcount Student
Asnuntuck	\$647
Capital	\$1522
Gateway	\$982
Housatonic	\$1097
Manchester	\$780
Middlesex	\$958
Naugatuck	\$815
Northwestern	\$614
Norwalk	\$768
Quinebaug	\$1025
Three Rivers	\$879
Tunxis	\$797

# FALL Components

- The second component of the FALL involved measuring the mitigating factors at each college. This consisted of examining the relative impact of the following three standards:
  1. Average Household (FISAP) Income
  2. Average Estimated Family Contribution (EFC)
  3. Percentage of Non-Matriculated students



Connecticut  
Community  
Colleges

*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## Financial Aid Mitigating Components

College	Average Household Income
Naugatuck	\$49206
Northwestern	\$48105
Middlesex	\$45664
Three Rivers	\$45113
Manchester	\$44271
Tunxis	\$44066
Asnuntuck	\$42776
Quinebaug	\$41464
Gateway	\$40429
Norwalk	\$39485
Housatonic	\$38792
Capital	\$31565



Education That Works For a Lifetime

# Financial Aid Mitigating Components

College	Average EFC
Naugatuck	6842
Northwestern	6263
Three Rivers	6050
Middlesex	6047
Tunxis	5846
Manchester	5628
Gateway	5112
Asnuntuck	5049
Quinebaug	4944
Norwalk	4746
Housatonic	4728
Capital	3279

Federal Pell Grant "Cut-Off" Point (4041)





Connecticut  
Community  
Colleges

*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

## Financial Aid Mitigating Components

College	Percentage of Non-Degree Students
Asnuntuck	1%
Capital	9%
Gateway	8%
Housatonic	5%
Manchester	7%
Middlesex	9%
Naugatuck	10%
Northwestern	5%
Norwalk	9%
Quinebaug	1%
Three Rivers	6%
Tunxis	9%

# Calculating the Financial Aid Infusion Index

- The raw scores in all six standard categories are converted to Z-Scores (Standard Scores).
- A Z-score acts as a common yard stick. It is a statistical measure that standardizes data to one scale for the sake of comparison. The mathematics of the Z-score transformation are such that if every item in a distribution is converted to its Z score, the transformed scores will have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Z-scores range between +/- 3.00.
- They are especially useful when seeking to compare the relative standings of items from distributions with different means and/or different standard deviations.

# Calculating the Financial Aid Infusion Index

- Calculate the average of the three (3) z-scores for the permeation components to create a “permeation composite” score.
- Calculate the average of the three (3) z-scores for the mitigation components to create a “mitigation composite” score.
- Add the two composites together to arrive upon the Financial Aid Infusion Index for that college.

# Example

## Housatonic Community College

Permeation  
Composite:

Applicants	Recipients	Funds/HC			
0.89	+	1.07	+	0.82	
				÷	
				3	
					= 0.93

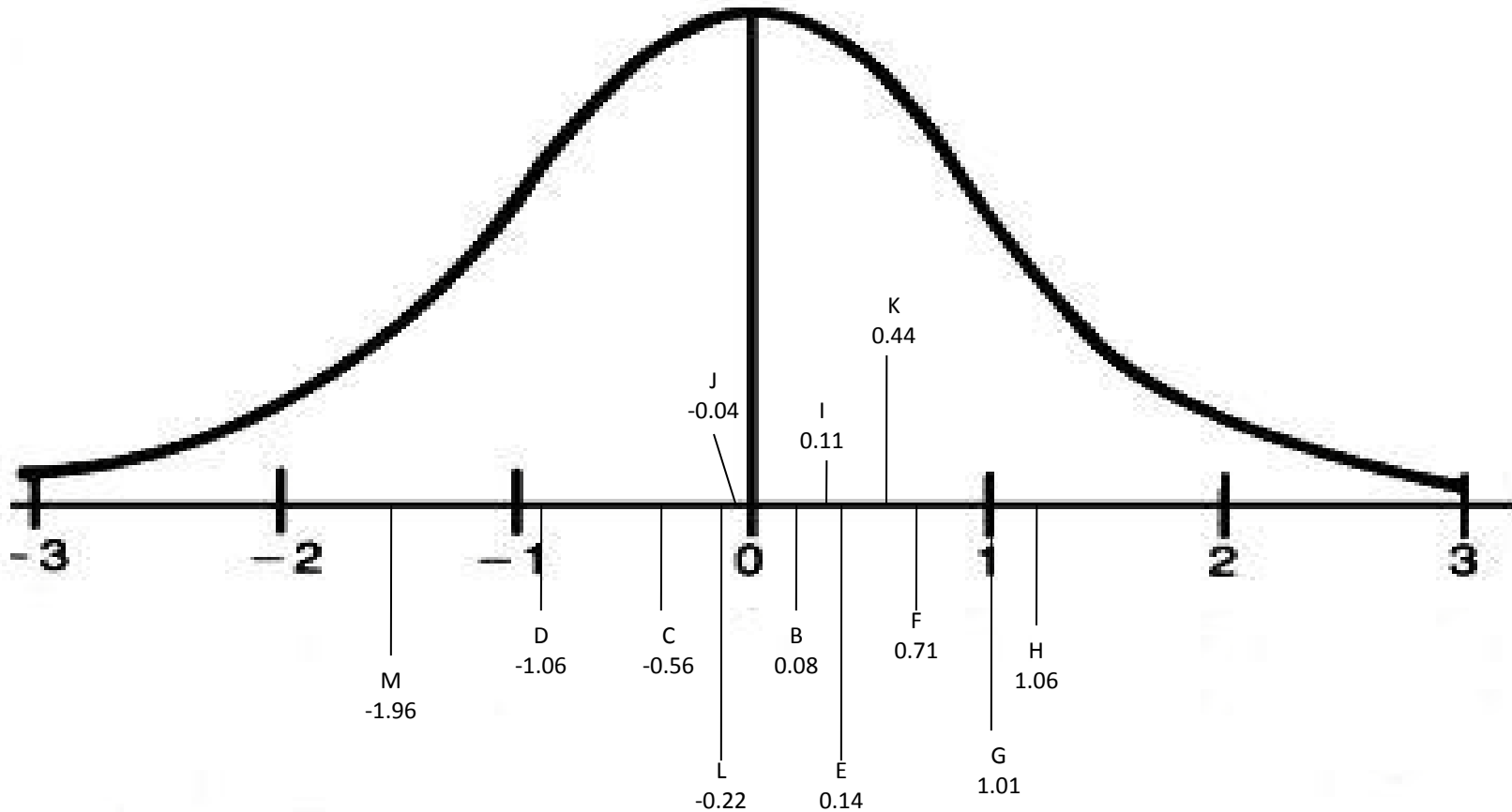
Mitigation  
Composite:

FISAP Inc.	EFC	STMJ			
-0.95	+	-0.72	+	-0.71	
				÷	
				3	
					= -0.79

Financial Aid  
Infusion Index:

Permeation Composite	Mitigation Composite		
0.93	+	-0.79	
			= 0.14

# FALL Distribution

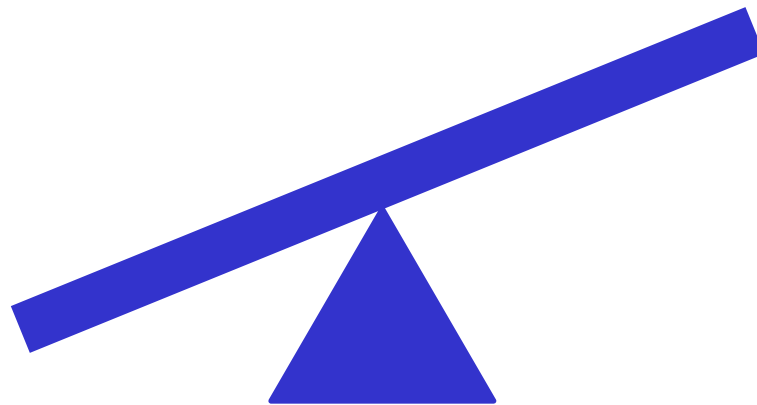




*Education That Works For a Lifetime*

# FALL Interpretation

- The zero (0) on the FALL distribution represents a metaphorical tipping point (as opposed to an arithmetic mean). It is the point indicative of whether financial aid permeation or mitigation components will assert themselves on a college campus, thus defining the balance accordingly.



# Where do we go from here?

- Is the FAIL a measure we can use to identify Red Tape, Road Blocks, & Rigmarole?
- What other data may be critical in the development of the FAIL?
- What lessons can we learn from the FAIL about our college financial aid services?