

**December 3, 2002**

## **Developing a Web-based Financial Aid System**

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### **Communication with Students – Electronic Mail**

As you know, an integral part of the financial aid process is effective communication with students relative to financial aid application and award status. While both of these areas are well served by students using the Banner Self-Service Web interface (Online.commnnet.edu), it is imperative that you push students to the web site. In partnering with Capital Community College on our pilot project, we developed a method of using electronic mail as a transition from snail mail (paper letters) to the web. Using our customized Banner letter generation process, we developed a procedure where you can send students (with e-mail addresses in Banner) an electronic mail notification that “pushes” the student to the web for detailed application and award information.

Here are the steps necessary to facilitate this electronic mail process for the 2003-04 award year:

1. Let us know using our web request form that you want to be involved in this e-mail process for 0304. E-mails will be sent to your students instead of paper letters when you invoke the regular letter generation jobs – either individually or in batch. The e-mail message is sent directly from the Banner db and will indicate that it is being sent from the “Financial Aid Office @ \_\_\_\_\_ Community College. You will need to provide us with an e-mail address established by your IT folks for this use. We recommend the format [XX-FinAid@xxx.commnnet.edu](mailto:XX-FinAid@xxx.commnnet.edu).
2. We will use this address for links on the Banner Web Self-Service product so students can e-mail your office if they have questions.
3. To enhance your staff’s ability to manage effectively the e-mail sent to the [XX-FinAid@xxx.commnnet.edu](mailto:XX-FinAid@xxx.commnnet.edu) address above, we suggest your local IT folks establish a “public folder” on your college’s Exchange server for your use. In this manner, you and designated staff can follow the “thread” of each e-mail conversation as well as maintain a record of communications with students. Your IT staff can seek help from the System Data Center Operations staff in establishing “public folders.” Please ask them to coordinate their requests and work with our IT project manager Joe McAuliffe. At a minimum, your IT staff will have to create a “distribution list” for you and your staff so e-mails sent to [XX-FinAid@xxx.commnnet.edu](mailto:XX-FinAid@xxx.commnnet.edu) are forwarded to the designated staff in your office.
4. If you intend to use Mapping Your Future or some other 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor to provide loan entrance & exit interview services for you, we recommend you also establish an [XX-FinAidLoans@xxx.commnnet.edu](mailto:XX-FinAidLoans@xxx.commnnet.edu) address. We also recommend you follow the “public folder” protocol mentioned above to facilitate communication among students and your staff.

It is your responsibility to make sure the proper e-mail addresses are established on your campus for your use during the 2003-04 Award Year. We will work with you, your local IT staff, and the System Data Center staff; however, we cannot do this setup work for you. **It is also imperative that you test the complete e-mail process in the Training db before implementing this process in the Production db for the 0304AY.**